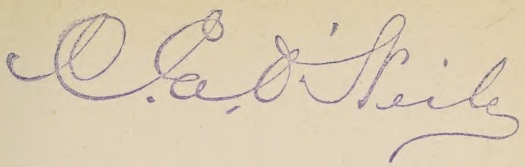
St. Patrick's Purgatory

Lough Derg



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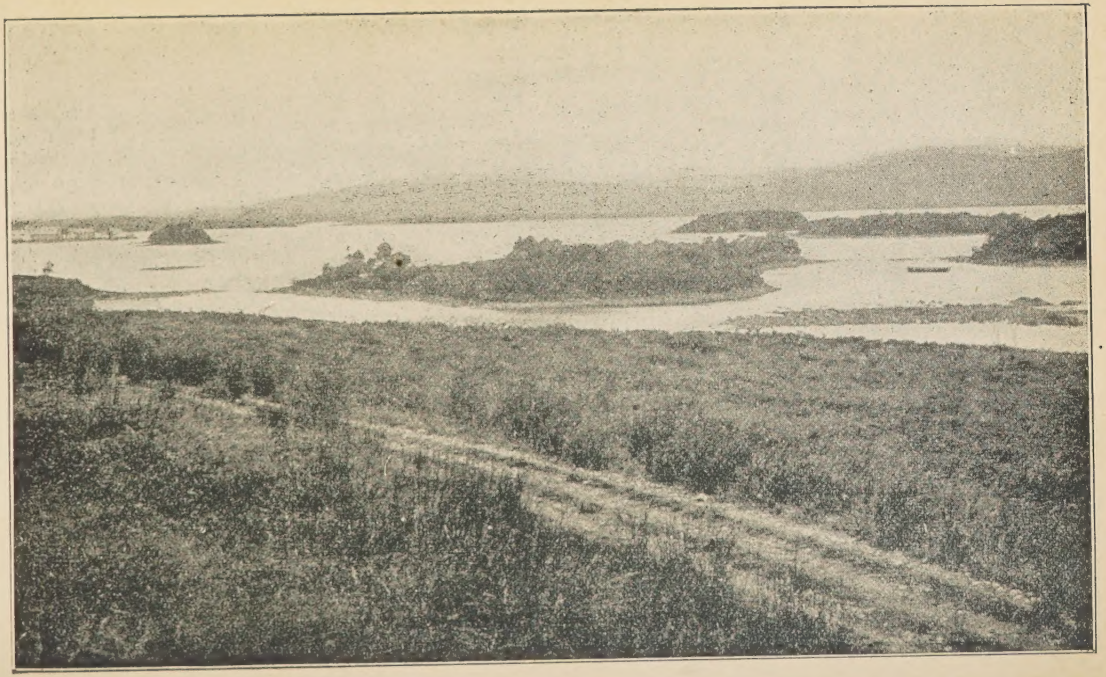

Bird's-Eye View of Lough Derg, Co. Donegal.

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ITS HISTORY, TRADITIONS, LEGENDS, ANTIQUITIES, TOPOGRAPHY, AND SCENIC SURROUNDINGS.

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF ITS MORE NOTABLE PILGRIMS, AND A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHORISED DEVOTIONS PERFORMED AT ITS VENERABLE SHRINE.

An Enlarged and Revised Edition,

With Numerous Plates and Illustrations.

BY

REV. D. CANON O'CONNOR, P.P.,

OF THE DIOCESE OF CLOGHER.

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LONDON: BURNS AND OATES, LTD. NEW YORK: BENZIGER BROS.

And Sold by all Booksellers and Stationers, and at the principal Railway Book Stalls.

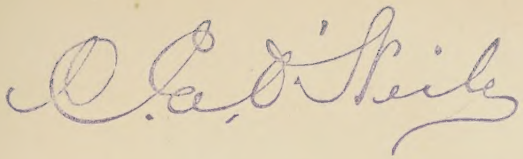
1895.

Nihil Obstat:

G. H. MURPHY, *S.T.D.*,
Censor Theol. Deput.

Imprimatur:

✠ GULIELMUS,
Archiepiscopus Dublinensis,
Hiberniæ Primas.



Dedication.

TO

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL LOGUE,

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH AND PRIMATE OF ALL IRELAND,

This Little Book

ON THE PILGRIMAGE OF LOUGH DERG,

IN THE COUNTY OF DONEGAL,

THAT HOME OF MANY SAINTS, SCHOLARS, AND VALIANT CHIEFTAINS,

THE BIRTH-PLACE OF ST. COLUMBA,

OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCES OF THE TYRCONNELL DYNASTY,

AND OF THE FIRST SUCCESSOR OF ST. PATRICK

RAISED TO THE EXALTED DIGNITY OF PRINCE OF THE CHURCH,

IS, BY GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

OF

OUR HOLY FATHER, POPE LEO XIII.

"St. Isadore's, Rome,

"*September 25th*, 1879.

"My Dear Father O'Connor,—This morning the Holy Father favoured us with a most agreeable audience, which lasted for about an hour. His Holiness treated our unworthiness most graciously and paternally, inquiring about everything connected with the state of religion in the diocese of Toronto, and expressing surprise at the number of our charitable and educational institutions.

"We took the opportunity to present him with your book on Lough Derg. After reading the Dedication, which was in the Latin language, he said he regretted he could not read the book itself, it being in English. I then briefly described the great pilgrimage of St. Patrick's Purgatory, telling of the numbers that frequent it, and the penitential exercises there practised. The Holy Father said he had already heard of this pilgrimage; and he expressed great satisfaction at the penances and good works of the pilgrims. I showed the Sovereign Pontiff a specimen of the oaten bread, and lake water used daily by the pilgrims at their solitary meal. Hereupon he shook his head, as if he considered the dietary scale a very low

one. In fine, the Holy Father was pleased to send his thanks for the book, as well as his Apostolic Benediction to yourself, and all others who have a share in the labours of the great mission of Lough Derg.

"The shamrock taken with me from the Holy Island, through confinement in my desk, had sickened and lost its leaves, though repeatedly aired by me. I, therefore, could not present it. I left it at the Irish Franciscan Convent of San Isidoro in care of one of the novices, with instructions to foster it, and when sufficiently revived, to convey it to the Holy Father, and have it planted in the Vatican gardens. They are to keep a sprig of it at St. Isidore's also.

"I must plead my fatigue as excuse for the shortness of this letter, and remain, my dear Father O'Connor, truly yours in Christ,

"✠ JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH,

"Archbishop of Toronto."

TESTIMONIALS.

—✠—

His Eminence Cardinal Newman (then Cardinal-Elect), writing from the Oratory, on 6th April, 1879, says:—

"I thank you most heartily for the present of your valuable and interesting work."

His Grace, the Most Rev. Dr. M'Cabe (afterwards Cardinal), Archbishop of Dublin, writes:—

"Your little book on Lough Derg will, I am convinced, do much good. It will help to fill up an interesting chapter in Irish Ecclesiastical history. And, whilst it brings before the minds of your readers the heroic austerity of our fathers, it will shame many cowardly souls, who see in the present mitigated fast of Lent mortification beyond their power to endure.

"Wishing your book the widest circulation,

"I remain yours sincerely,

28*th March*, 1879. "✠ E. M'Cabe."

His Grace the Archbishop of Cashel thus writes of it:—

"My Dear Father O'Connor.—It is time for me to thank you for your very edifying and instructive book about Lough Derg, which you were kind enough to send me. I must visit the place myself; and, when I do, shall make you out, and thank you personally for your kindness.

"I am, dear Father O'Connor,

"Yours very faithfully,

"✠ T. W. Croke."

The Palace, Thurles, *April 2nd*, 1879.

"The Rev. Daniel O'Connor, a young priest of the diocese of Clogher, has put all Irish Catholics under heavy obligations to him for his learned treatise on St. Patrick's Purgatory of Lough Derg. It is the first that has seen the light in anything like a complete form."

From a learned article on Lough Derg written by the Most Rev. Dr. Lynch, Archbishop of Toronto, and published in consecutive numbers of the Toronto *Tribune* of April, 1879.

The late venerated Bishop of Clogher, Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly, after a careful perusal of its contents, thus expresses his approbation :—

"I have read over your compilation on the Sanctuary and Station of Lough Derg, and have found in it nothing adverse to faith or morals. Its perusal, indeed, has given me considerable satisfaction : and I conceive that the book may tend to the edification of the faithful, and to the popularity of that grand old shrine, which has been the home of so many saints, the haven of so many sinners, and which we regard as one of the proudest glories of this ancient diocese. One cannot but admire your industry in exploring the records and monuments of past ages, connected with St. Patrick's Purgatory."

Bishop's Residence, Monaghan,
20*th January*, 1879.

That learned and distinguished writer, Very Rev. John Canon O'Hanlon, P.P., M.R.I.A., Author of the "Lives of the Irish Saints," thus expresses his appreciation of "Lough Derg and its Pilgrimages" in a letter to the author, bearing date 1st January, 1879 :—

"And now as to Lough Derg, to say I like it vastly is what every reader will say ; but, in good truth, I am charmed with it, after a full examination of the proof-sheets, and I predict it will be a highly popular and most admirable guide-book—light and lively, learned and scholarly."

SOME NOTICES AND REVIEWS OF THE FIRST EDITION.

The *Irish Monthly* of 1879, writing of it, says:—

"We greet this very interesting little volume with a hearty welcome for two reasons: it treats of a subject interesting in itself, and doubly so to us, because it is Irish, and because it is sacred . . . Hence we are glad to have a full account of this famous place of pilgrimage, written by one who has many qualifications for the task . . . We expected that his book would prove a valuable addition to the historical and antiquarian literature of Ireland, and in this hope we have not been disappointed. Everywhere the writer gives evidence of laborious research, and considerable critical acumen in weighing conflicting authorities."

"The sanctuary on Lough Derg is, we need hardly say, one of the most venerated of Irish shrines. It has been the scene of pilgrimages for centuries, and its fame has penetrated far beyond the boundaries of Ireland. It is hardly creditable that, until within the past few weeks, the history of such a place should remain unwritten, except in so far as it is recorded piecemeal in works dealing with other subjects, and inaccessible, owing to their cost, to the general public. The reproach has, however, been well removed by the publication of "*Lough Derg and its Pilgrimages,*" which Rev. D. O'Connor of the diocese of Clogher has just brought out."—*Nation*, 1st March, 1879.

. . . "Father O'Connor's interesting book, containing not only a full description of the lake and island in their present state, with a map and illustrations, but also a history of Lough Derg and its pilgrimage in ancient times, and an account of the saints connected with them. The volume is well worthy of perusal, and it has the advantage of being commended to the attention of the public by a letter of the Bishop of Clogher." . . .—London *Tablet*, March 8th, 1879.

"Father O'Connor, of the diocese of Clogher, has done a work of national importance, and has earned for himself the national gratitude, in presenting to the Irish public his valuable and interesting book on Lough Derg and its pilgrimages. He has lovingly gathered together everything that chronicle, or song, or legend has said or preserved of Lough Derg, and has shown skill, judgment and discrimination in the manner in which he has used the materials he has collected. His book does vast credit to

his industry, his research and his enthusiasm in everything connected with his subject; and we congratulate him on the successful result of his labours."—Dublin *Freeman's Journal*, 12th March, 1879.

"An opportunity is now afforded of learning all that research and the zealous study of years have as yet made known of this once great shrine by a recent work of a priest of the Clogher diocese. Father O'Connor has done a great service by his publication. He has compiled an amount of information in his volume that is interesting and profoundly instructive . . . In any way we view this book it is interesting in the extreme. It is full of historic facts that a Lord Macaulay could have woven into a romantic essay, but which our author simply details as beams of his argument, and it has given us more pleasure than any volume we have perused for some time past."—New York *Tablet*, 5th April, 1879.

"Dealing as it does with subjects both sacred and national in the highest sense of the words, this carefully compiled little volume will be found full of interest to the Irish Catholic . . . Those who desire information on the matter of this pilgrimage cannot do better than peruse this most interesting work, the author of which deserves all praise for the style of his production."—Cork *Examiner*, 15th March, 1879.

"This little volume deals with one of the most interesting spots in our country. Apart from the beauty of the place itself, one cannot but regard with a feeling warmer than that of mere curiosity, a locality which has drawn to it year by year thousands of fervid pilgrims. Lough Derg is not only a feature in Irish geography, it is also a sacred spot in Irish ecclesiastical history . . . Father O'Connor has done his work well, and having read his book with pleasure, we may predict for it the position of a classic in the literature of Irish pilgrimages."—Belfast *Morning News*, 14th Feb. 1879.

"The Rev. Daniel O'Connor, C.C., priest of the diocese of Clogher, the author of this most interesting, instructive, and edifying book, and the enterprising and respectable publisher, who has brought it out in such excellent style, have really conferred a most essential service on the reading public. Devout Catholics of all countries, but more especially Irish Catholics, and the lovers of antiquarian studies in general, will feel the greatest interest and satisfaction in the perusal of its full and accurate accounts of the world-renowned sanctuaries of religion which are so admirably sketched and illustrated in this well-written, historical and descriptive compilation. Father O'Connor deserves the greatest credit for thus supplying a desideratum, which has long been felt in the want of a carefully compiled hand-book of the Pilgrimage of Lough Derg; and we

sincerely hope that the encouragement which the reverend author may receive from the public will enable him to realise, in that event, his intention of publishing a new and greatly enlarged edition of the work . . . The principal object of the author in publishing the work, appears to have been to make known the blessings and graces to be derived from the pilgrimage. But besides attaining this excellent object, Father O'Connor has added one more original and very valuable contribution to our national literature, which in works of antiquarian, historical, topographical, and even devotional interest is, it must be confessed, by no means so well supplied as might be expected from the number of our writers."—Maurice Lenihan in Limerick *Reporter*, 21st March, 1879.

"There are few places in Ireland associated with such venerable antiquity, and such hallowed memories as Lough Derg . . . But up to the present, there was a want in the field of literature of such a concise authentic history of Lough Derg as would be suitable and likely to find its way into the hands of those who have naturally a desire to possess such a work, and who are almost debarred for many reasons from studying any references to the 'Island' that are given in some rare and expensive publications. Father O'Connor's volume, therefore, deserves and is certain to receive a cordial welcome. The rev. author has succeeded in compiling a treatise, plainly the result, first, of a labour of love; second, of much research; third, of much care and judgment; and fourth, of very respectable size, consisting, as it does, of over two hundred pages, largely illustrated and handsomely bound in green and gold . . . We commend most warmly this excellent work to those of our readers desirous of knowing all that can be told of St. Patrick's Purgatory."—Londonderry *Journal*, 14th Feb. 1879.

"This book, which issued from the press only a few days ago, has already attained a front place in the Catholic literature of the country . . . We shall not anticipate the pleasure which so many of our readers will derive from a perusal of the book itself by further reference to its contents. We shall only say that a book comprising in so narrow a compass, such a variety of interesting matter has rarely come our way. We venture to predict that this book will awaken pleasant memories in many an Irish breast at home and in foreign lands."—Monaghan *People's Advocate*, 1st March, 1879.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

In the midst of many and engrossing cares I have yielded to the pressing solicitations of esteemed friends to bring out a new issue of my publication on Lough Derg. Though my opportunities for study and research were not what I might have desired, I am confident the reader will find in the following pages much new matter, and some of great interest. Doubtless there yet remain in its history *lacunæ* to be filled up, upon which in future fresh light may be cast. Whatever profits may accrue from the sale of the book I purpose devoting towards the new Votive Church of the Pilgrimage.

D. O'C.

Newtownbutler, *6th August*, 1895.

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* Both from photographs by Mr. W. Lawrence, Dublin, who with the utmost kindness has permitted me to copy them for my book on Lough Derg.—Ed.

PREFACE.

—❧—

I HAVE been asked to introduce to the reading public the present edition of "Lough Derg and its Pilgrimages," and I very willingly do so, believing that it will help to render still more illustrious the fame of our only National Pilgrimage, and will be the means of bringing within reach of its saving influence many who otherwise might not be attracted to this holy shrine.

The pious exercise of pilgrimage is as old as religion itself. From the earliest ages the Church has never failed to foster and cherish this religious practice. Love and veneration for the places rendered memorable by the life and sufferings of our Divine Lord, of the Apostles, and of the great servants of God in every age, prompted and impelled the faithful to visit in a spirit of religious fervour such favoured and holy places. Among the most ancient and venerated places of pilgrimage throughout the world that of St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, generally credited to have been originated by St. Patrick himself, may be included. Since the days of our National Apostle it has extended its salutary influence not only to the Celtic race, but to pilgrims even from the most distant nations. This Sanctuary, still amongst the most noted in Europe, was visited during the Ages of the Faith by pilgrims not only from every part of these Islands, but from France.

Spain, Germany, Austria, and even from Italy itself. Despite the vicissitudes through which it has passed, it still continues to attract many fervent souls; and, though pilgrims of foreign nationalities may be here met with, by far the greater number are of the Celtic race, many of them coming from distant climes, who, in revisiting the land of their birth and of their affections, seldom omit a pilgrimage to the "Holy Island."

In these days of awakened fervour, when the pilgrim spirit has been so amazingly revived in the Church, and when so many annually leave Ireland, journeying to far-off shrines, to Lourdes, Paray-le-Monial, La Salette, and others, we deem it not unreasonable to remind such persons that there exists within the boundaries of this diocese a sanctuary no less venerable and holy, and of greater antiquity and celebrity, a sanctuary, which is not only one of the proudest glories of this diocese, but one of the brightest of the religious institutions of Ireland.

I have more than once had the privilege of making a somewhat prolonged stay on the "Island" during the Pilgrimage season; and the conviction forced upon me on the occasion of each visit was, that nowhere is faith more lively, grace more abundant, repentance more sincere, contrition more hearty, or charity more fervent than among those who, whether for the purpose of securing their reconciliation with God, or of establishing themselves in the practice of the Christian virtues, visit as pilgrims the Sanctuary of Lough Derg.

For centuries past the Holy See has enriched this

Sanctuary with many spiritual favours, and to those who perform the pilgrimage it has bestowed a Plenary Indulgence. Hitherto a hand-book, or guide to the pilgrimage was much needed and anxiously sought after. It is gratifying to find that the want has been at length well supplied by that useful publication, "St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg," written by a worthy priest of this diocese.

In his preface to the first edition, published several years ago, Canon O'Connor held out the hope that, if the public should extend to his effort a moderate amount of encouragement, he would hereafter "enlarge the work considerably by adding additional matter, by inserting further engravings, and by supplying a copious index," or table of contents.

What encouragement the learned author has already received, is best judged of by the eagerness with which the appearance of the present edition has for some time been expected, while the volume itself speaks sufficiently of the manner in which Canon O'Connor has kept his engagement with the public.

✠ R. Owens,
Bishop of Clogher.

Monaghan,
4th August, 1895.

ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY.

LOUGH DERG.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE ORIGIN AND PRACTICE OF PILGRIMAGES.

IN an age of scepticism and unbelief, it is refreshing to turn aside from the busy paths of the world, in order to contemplate the sanctuaries of religion and the holy shrines of pilgrimage, round which are encircled the most sacred associations and the most venerable traditions. To rescue them from the baneful effects of neglect, and to place before an admiring public their former fame and lustre, should be deemed a work truly meritorious.

And since there is nothing so consoling to the human heart as the sweetening influences of religion, those purifying delights of the senses and of the soul, so there is no other study or reflection more profitable to the mind than the consideration of the holy places of religion, with the records of the virtue and piety of their saintly inmates. Among the countless number of places dedicated to religious uses, none can lay such claim to the homage of our veneration as the places of religious pilgrimage—those places purified by prayers and penances of saints, blessed by their labours, sanctified by the sweet odour of their

virtues, and consecrated anew to that original purity which the world enjoyed before the Fall.

From the earliest ages men were wont to set apart certain places possessing special features of fitness for divine worship, wherein to pay homage and adoration to God. Nor was natural fitness * considered sufficient for a place to be deemed holy. Over and above all it was necessary that it should receive some title of sanctity and of consecration from God, or from His chosen servants. And highly as we must revere the places blessed by God's servants, whether angels or men, the deepest veneration of all is due to such places as receive their consecration immediately from God—presenting, as they do, the impress and sign manual, so to say, of God Himself. God has frequently deputed the saints, His servants, to consecrate places to His special service; for, the saint is the living temple of the Holy Ghost; he diffuses on all sides the salutary example and influence of virtue; his friends love and cherish his memory, and revere for his sake the very places with which are associated his pious actions, his prayers and austerities. Even after he quits the scene of this life, men are drawn by the memory of the sweet attractions of his virtues round his grave, and thus his last resting-place comes to be invested with the character of holiness. Hence it is that not only natural fitness and selection, but also prayer, penance, pious custom, sacred ceremony, and above all, some special manifestation of holiness, whether by consecration on the part of God Himself, or through the instrumentality of His servants, combine to confer upon a place a distinctive

* In a work written by an Oratorian, Rev. P. de Rivieres, and entitled "Holy Places, their Sanctity and Authenticity" (London, 1874), the various essentials necessary to render a place holy, and in consequence a resort for pilgrimage, are fully dealt with.

character of sanctity, and render it a fit resort for pilgrimage.

Such holy places there have been from the beginning, in which men were wont to converse familiarly with God, as did Moses on Mount Sinai. Many of those sacred places, likewise, have become lost to memory, such as the places reputed sacred during the patriarchal times, the places dignified by the visions of several of the prophets, and not even a few of the places rendered notable by the miracles of our Divine Lord and His Apostles.

In every age of the world and among all nations there have been pilgrimages. Even the Pagans had shrines of pilgrimage; as, for instance, those of Jupiter Tyrius at Gades, Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, and Apollo at Delphi. The Druids had their sacred groves. The Mahometans make pilgrimage to the tomb of the arch-impostor, Mahomet, at Mecca. In the Old Law there were Levitical cities and retreats, which God set apart for Himself in Israel; and the Jews were accustomed to journey at fixed periods to the Temple of Jerusalem, which was their chief place of pilgrimage. But, to the New Law, in which religion received its full perfection and development, was it reserved to establish the practice of pilgrimages as an exercise of Christian piety. In those pious journeys the holy places at Jerusalem, and the various scenes rendered for ever sacred in connection with the life and passion of our Blessed Saviour, occupy the foremost position. Next in order rank the shrines of the Madonna, especially the Holy House of Loretto in Italy, and, since the event of 1858, the grotto of Our Lady at Lourdes, and numerous other shrines of hers in many lands. After these come the tombs of the Apostles, SS. Peter and Paul at Rome, while next in order follow

the chief places of pilgrimage in every country, in Ireland St. Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg holding the most prominent rank.

The Abbé Receveur, in his *Discours sur l'Histoire Ecclesiastique*,* writes thus on the development of pilgrimages:—

"One can readily understand how the spirit of devotion came to attract people to the places sanctified by the presence and by the passion of our Saviour. This respect for the holy places and for the tombs of the Apostles gave rise to pilgrimages. They began in the early ages; for, we learn that St. Alexander, who became bishop of Jerusalem, journeyed from Cappadocia to visit the holy places. The freedom granted to the Church, and the discovery of the true Cross, rendered pilgrimages more easy and more frequent. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Jerome, and the historian Sozomene testify that during the fourth century the holy places were visited by multitudes of pilgrims, who had recourse to them from all the nations of the earth. This devotion continued after Palestine had fallen into the hands of the Mussulmans.

"As to the tombs of saints and martyrs, people came to them even from a great distance, not only on festival days, but at other times also. Every one knows how celebrated had come to be pilgrimage to Rome, to the tombs of the holy Apostles, to the tomb of St. Martin at Tours, to that of St. James at Compostella, etc. Princes, bishops, monks, and religious of every order showed great zeal in carrying out this practice of devotion. The custom, also, became gradually established during the eighth century of imposing a pilgrimage by way of penance. The Council of Chalons, held in 813, under Charlemagne, whilst approving of the practice, warned against abuses of it."

The Ages of Faith were the golden age of pilgrimages. It is stated by Hallam, a very prejudiced writer, that

* Tom. IX. (D), p. 447.

during the eleventh century more pilgrims went to Jerusalem than at any previous time; and writing of the Crusades, he says "they were martial pilgrimages on an enormous scale." *

Our holy mother the Church (whilst approving of the practice of pilgrimage as a potent incentive to a devout life, and acknowledging that God frequently bestows His favours, graces, and miracles at particular shrines to honour certain mysteries, angels, or saints,) has always guarded with the most zealous care those holy places. Next to the deposit of Divine faith, and the persons of her sacred ministers, there is nothing she so much cherishes as those sanctuaries. In order to guard them she has enacted much provident legislation; and against such as would despoil or profane them she hesitates not to inflict the severest censures.

Regarding the holy places of Palestine,† we read that the Saracens inflicted such indignities upon the pilgrims thereto, as to inflame the indignation of Christendom. To obviate this difficulty, Pope Urban II. summoned the Council of Clermont in 1095, and here the first Crusade against the Mussulmans was published. That great enterprise was preached with extraordinary zeal throughout Western Europe by Peter the Hermit; and the result of it and the subsequent Crusades was that the holy places were placed in the custody of religious orders, and became again accessible to pilgrims.

The so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century.

* *Europe during the Middle Ages*, p. 608.

† Eusebius fully describes the pilgrimage of St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, to the holy places at Jerusalem, and her discovery of the true Cross in the early part of the fourth century. Adamnan, abbot of Iona, also wrote a work, "De Locis Sanctis," based on the narrative of a French bishop, Arculfus, who visited Jerusalem in the seventh century.

with the wars and countless calamities occasioned thereby, rendered it impossible in many countries for pilgrimages to take place as of old. But, as those bitter animosities are happily passing away, thanks to the enlightenment of the age in which we live, the world is again directing its attention to a study of the early Christian ages, and the early Christian practices, and, amongst the rest, the practice of pilgrimage.* And thus it is that many of the early pilgrimages, suppressed by the Protestant Reformation, are again becoming revived, and putting forth renewed life and vigour, just as the seedling buried deep in the earth during winter will start into life under the genial influence of spring, and clothe itself in verdure after the storms have passed away.

The motives for undertaking a pilgrimage are briefly the following:—1st, To enliven faith and feelings of piety in the soul by visiting those places in which the Divine power is specially manifested. 2nd, In fulfilment of a vow. 3rd, In order to obtain some particular favour or blessing through the intercession of the tutelary saint of the place. And 4th, in fulfilment of some penitential obligation, whether self-imposed, or enjoined by one's spiritual guide.

* "The increase in the number of pilgrimages and pilgrims is one of the most remarkable facts in current history. The pilgrims to Rome numbered 55,000 persons, chiefly workingmen. Lourdes had this season 280,000, La Salette, 120,000, and St. Anne d'Auray, 53,000. Montmartre, the new shrine overlooking Paris, is visited every week by between 5,000 and 10,000 pilgrims. The crowd at Trèves, which is made up of all classes and nationalities, has nearly reached 2,000,000. In England there are pilgrims, but their numbers are not large. Six hundred and eighty visited the tomb of A'Beckett at Canterbury, and worshipped at the spot where he suffered death. Last week 250 persons went in pilgrimage to Holywell in Wales, and there has been an immense concourse of pilgrims at 'Gougane Barra,' the tomb of St. Finbarr, in County Cork. The Empress of Austria is going on a pilgrimage to Loretto." —*From Irish Catholic, Oct.* 10, 1891.

CHAPTER II.

LOVE OF THE IRISH FOR PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE—THEIR MULTIPLICATION—STONE CROSSES—HOLY WELLS—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY.

THAT the children of the Irish race were largely endowed with the pilgrim spirit is sufficiently attested by the great number of places of pilgrimage throughout that country. In its zeal for the holy places the early Irish Church spread the network of sanctity over the whole extent of the land. Much might be written on pilgrimages made by the children of Erin not only to the shrines of devotion in their own country, but also to the famous pilgrimages of the Continent and of the Holy Land. A few instances out of many will amply prove the existence of pilgrimages as a religious institution even in the earliest ages of the faith in Ireland. The following pilgrimages are noted in the *Annals of the Four Masters*:—

"A.D. 610. Gorman . . . . . on his pilgrimage at Cluain-mic-nois."

"A.D. 704. Beg Boirche took a pilgrim's staff."

"A.D. 753. Gorman died at Clonmacnoise on his pilgrimage."

"A.D. 767. Niall Frosach died at Hy-Colum-cille on his pilgrimage."

"A.D. 777. Artgall went to Hy on pilgrimage."

"A.D. 786. Ardgal, son of Cathal, king of Connaught, died at Hy on his pilgrimage."

"A.D. 825. Not well we have taken Eoghan in preference to any pilgrim in Ireland."

"A.D. 834. Aedhagan, abbot of Louth, died on his pilgrimage at Clonmacnoise."

"A.D. 869. Maenghal, the pilgrim, abbot of Bangor, died."

"A.D. 885. Anauloen, the pilgrim, came to Ireland with the epistle."

Two saints connected with the diocese of Clogher, viz., St. Molaise of Devenish and St. Endeus, afterwards of Arran, made pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles in Rome.

In Eugene O'Curry's *MS. Materials of Irish History* (p. 380, *et seq.*), we find a learned notice of the Litany of Aenghus the Culdee. The Litany begins thus:—"Three times fifty pilgrims who settled in *Ui-Mele* . . . . . *invoco in auxilium meum per Jesum Christum.*"

"The other thrice fifty pilgrims of Rome and Latium, who went into Scotia (as Ireland was then called), *invoco in auxilium per Jesum Christum.*"

Aenghus goes on to recount countless numbers of men, lay and ecclesiastical, who left Erin on pilgrimage to the Holy Land under SS. Ailbhé, Brendan, etc. The Litany was compiled about the year 798, and hence we can safely infer that the practice of pilgrimage was a general and cherished institution during the three hundred years that intervened between the time of St. Patrick and the invasion of the Danes. In the same learned work of Professor O'Curry we find (pp. 76, 77,) an account of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land undertaken by three students of Maelsuthain O'Carroll, who was preceptor and counsellor of Brian Boroimhe, and who lived towards the close of the tenth century. However legendary this narrative may be, it emphasises all the same the practice of pilgrimages as then existing.

The foregoing instances abundantly attest the practice of pilgrimages as existing in the early Irish Church. Of the prevalence of this pious practice during the middle

ages we have more abundant records. In Dr. Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus* (Chap. 25), the names of many Irish ecclesiastics, and the dates of their pilgrimages, will be found commemorated. Duald M'Firbis, quoted by O'Donovan ("Four Masters," p. 944), gives details of the great pilgrimage undertaken in the year 1445 to the city of St. James in Spain. During the years of Jubilee large crowds of the children of St. Patrick visited the shrines of the Apostles. While even the distant sanctuaries of the Holy Land, rendered for ever sacred to the Christian heart by the life and passion of our Blessed Saviour, were frequently visited with reverent devotion by many pilgrims from Erin.

Pilgrimage to Crosses and Holy Wells once was, and to a considerable extent still continues to be, a very popular and cherished devotion among the Catholics of Ireland. Of those Crosses and Holy Wells many were blessed by the saints, whose names they bear; while others were dedicated to them and placed under their tutelage. On the vigil or festival of the saint, under whose invocation they were placed, the faithful made pilgrimage to them, and went through a prescribed course of devotional exercises. In an ancient life of St. Columbkille, preserved in the Leabhar Breac, it is said of him:— "He blessed three hundred miraculous crosses. He blessed three hundred wells, which were constant."

The frequentation of those holy places became a matter of supreme difficulty after the reign of persecution had set in. Such was the unrelenting suppression of all Catholic observances that it would be difficult to understand how this pious practice could have, to any extent, survived. Thus it is that many of those cherished spots have come to be forgotten, together with the interesting circumstances and traditions connected with them. The partial

extermination of the Celtic race, and the introduction of new settlers, with new habits and ideas, contributed, likewise, to hasten the decline of this time-honoured practice. Abuses, also, in some instances crept in, having their origin in the penal times, which rendered those gatherings objectionable to the ecclesiastical authorities; and, in consequence, many of those pilgrimages were discontinued. "Much, however," writes the Rev. Dean Cogan in his *History of the Diocese of Meath*, "of the poetry of religion, of the chivalry of lively faith, much that was grand and romantic in the heartfelt devotion of a truly Catholic people, is intertwined with the history of the Holy Wells in Ireland."

According to O'Kelly (*Descrip. Hib.* p. 40), there were four principal places of pilgrimage in Ireland, one in each of the provinces; namely, St. Patrick's Mountain (Croagh-Patrick) in Connaught; his Purgatory in Ulster; St. Michael's Rock in Munster, *i.e.*, Skellig-Michael, off the coast of Kerry; and St. Kevin's Bed at Glendalough in Leinster. His words are:—

> "Cumulus Sancti Patritii in Conatia;
> Purgatorium in Ultonia;
> Petra Sti. Michaelis in Momonia;
> Lectus Sti. Kaini in Lagenia."

Among these St. Patrick's Purgatory has always held the foremost place, and over all the others it must be regarded as by pre-eminence the National Pilgrimage of Ireland. Many circumstances contributed to give prominence to Lough Derg among the holy places of this island. The antiquity of its origin, which dates back to our National Apostle; its course of penance, which at the present day, even in its mitigated form, finds no parallel in the Christian world; the many saints and anchorets

who found there a very desert of seclusion; the number of pilgrims in every age, and of every rank and condition of life, who there trod the hard road of penance; these and many other circumstances, perhaps of still greater force, have caused it to be esteemed as the most notable pilgrimage of the Irish Church. Its fame, too, has been greatly enhanced by the persecution with which it was assailed by the so-called Reformers. Around it, as though the last citadel of Religion in Ireland, lashed the fury of English and Scotch apostasy; special Acts of Parliament were passed for its total suppression; honours and rewards for its abolition were offered during several reigns to bishops of the Protestant Establishment, and other adventurers; and the whole power of the State was brought to bear on this ancient sanctuary, with a view to its total extinction.

The oldest existing institution of the Irish Church is the pilgrimage of St. Patrick's Purgatory. It forms a connecting link between the days of St. Patrick and the present time. The penitential exercises of this pilgrimage constitute the most venerable, and, perhaps, the only authorised surviving instance of the early Irish religious observances and penitential discipline—a discipline under which so many saints and scholars flourished. This pilgrimage has been always regulated and conducted by the ecclesiastical authorities. It has never been interrupted, at least for any notable time. Primate Hugh MacMahon, writing of it in 1714, says:—"Whilst everywhere else throughout the kingdom the ecclesiastical functions have ceased, by reason of the prevailing persecution, in this island, as if it were placed in another orb, the exercise of religion is free and public, which is to be ascribed to a special favour of Divine Providence, and to the merits of Saint Patrick."

During the middle ages poetic imagination and romance had invented a very erroneous and misleading* picture of St. Patrick's Purgatory. That it was so called because of any similarity between its exercises and the sufferings of the Purgatorial state hereafter, or because of its local proximity to it, no one will for a moment admit.

A plausible reason for its being called St. Patrick's Purgatory is given in a Louvain treatise of the 17th century, called the *Mirror of Penance*. We are there told how St. Patrick removed from the distractions of the world into that gloomy ᵹeᵹc, or cave; and there prayed that the pains of Purgatory might be revealed to him. His request was granted. St. Patrick was so much awed by this vision, that he departed from the cave, and ordered that henceforth the island should be made a terrestrial purgatory, where sinners could atone for their sins by prayer and fasting.

For the origin of the Purgatory, designated by St. Antoninus *Patriciæ Procurationis*, a different cause is assigned by Mathew of Paris, whose opinion is followed by Denis the Carthusian and St. Antoninus. These authors state that St. Patrick, first Apostle of Ireland, when preaching the Gospel in that kingdom, found the people most reluctant to believe his words. They told him that they would not be converted to Christ unless he would show them those pains and pleasures of the future life of which he preached. The Saint prayed long

* In a geographical treatise, entitled *Image du Monde*, composed by Gualier de Metz, a writer of the 12th century, may be found an instance of such exaggeration and misrepresentation. He says: —"In Ireland there is a place from which day and night issues fire; it is called the Purgatory of Saint Patrick, and if any persons enter it without having repented they are immediately carried off, and no one can tell what has become of them. But if they have confessed and repented, they will pass through many torments, and be purified of their sins."

and fervently for that favour. Thereupon, having obtained the power of being able to manifest to the people the truth of his words, he struck the earth with his pastoral staff, forming with it the Sign of the Cross,* and immediately a deep pit or cave opened up, into which those who might enter truly repentant and remain there one whole day and night would be cleansed of the offences of their whole life.

The origin of the name, however, is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that St. Patrick selected this island for the performance of those works of penance, for which he was so remarkable, and that so many saints and pious pilgrims imitated his example; the island in consequence being called St. Patrick's Purgatory, or place of penance. This meaning is conveyed in the following sweet lines taken from Denis Florence MacCarthy's translation of Calderon's *Purgatory of St. Patrick*:—

> "Where although 'twas plain they suffered,
> Still they looked with joyous faces,
> Wore a peaceable appearance,
> Uttered no impatient accents;
> But with moistened eyes uplifted
> Towards the heavens, appeared imploring
> Pity, and their sins lamenting—
> This in truth was Purgatory."

* In the writer's possession is a work written by Don Jehan Peres de Monteluan, and translated from the Spanish by F. A. S. Chartreux (Brussels, 1659), which has for its title, *La Vie Admirable du Grand S. Patrice, Patriarche D'Hibernie, avec l'Histoire veritable de son fameux et tant renommé Purgatoire*, in which there is an engraving representing our Saviour standing beside St. Patrick, who holds his pastoral staff, and beneath him appears an open pit in which souls are represented in their purgatorial state immersed in a pool of liquid fire.

CHAPTER III.

TEMPLECARNE—LOUGH DERG—THE ORIGIN OF ITS NAME—THE LAKE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

OUGH DERG is situated within the parish of Templecarne, barony of Tyrhugh, County of Donegal, and diocese of Clogher. It is distant some four miles from the little town of Pettigo, which is a station on the Enniskillen and Bundoran line of railway. Proceeding from Pettigo to Lough Derg one cannot fail to observe at some distance to the left of the roadway the churchyard of Templecarne, from which the parish, including Lough Derg, derives its name. Of Templecarne we find but the following solitary notice in the Annals of the Four Masters under the year 1497:—"O'Donnell, *i.e.* Hugh Roe, resigned his lordship on the kalends of June, being Friday, at Templecarne, in the Termon, in consequence of the dissensions of his sons."

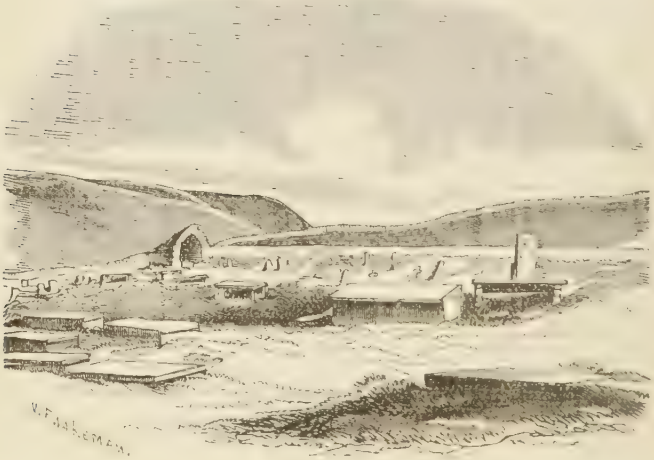
It is a remarkable coincidence that it was in this very year the Edict of Pope Alexander VI. ordering the closing of the Cave on the island of Lough Derg, was put into force. Scarcely a vestige of this old church of Termon Magrath now remains. The walls have been completely demolished; and it is no easy matter to trace their outline and dimensions, which we ventured to accomplish by taking the hollow space in the centre as the interior of the church, and the higher elevations on each side of it as the positions of the walls. Like most of the medieval churches its position was from east to west, and its

measurement about 66 by 22 feet. After a convenient custom, then commonly adopted, the Protestant settlers of the Termon appropriated this church to their own purposes, and it so continued to be used until a Protestant church was erected in the town of Pettigo. For ages has its churchyard been used as a place of sepulture by Protestants and Catholics alike. A substantial wall encloses it; and a convenient path and gateway make it easy of access to the Lough Derg pilgrim whom curiosity may induce to turn aside for the sake of visiting it. The visitor to Templecarne will be struck with the number and variety of its monuments, on some of which strange heraldic devices and quaint inscriptions are carved. Marking a grave in Templecarne may be seen an object of much interest, being part of one* of the termon-crosses which marked the boundary of Termon-Dabheoc. That learned antiquarian, Mr. Wakeman, holds that it is as old as the ninth century; and closely resembles, though of smaller size, the termon-crosses of Tullagh, Co. Dublin. We shall have more to add later on regarding this remarkable cross. If we may credit local statements, quite a number of the gravestones of Templecarne belonged originally to the church and monastery on Saints' Island, Lough Derg.

Within the precincts of Templecarne churchyard, and at its western extremity, may be seen, as shown in the

* The termon-cross, of which this is a fragment, stood on the hill of Drumawark, about one mile in a direct line to the north-east of Templecarne. The fragment in question includes the head of the cross and a small portion of the shaft. Its pedestal portion measures 1 foot 4 inches. The cross from the circular band upwards is 2 feet; the arms being but 11 inches in width. A small part of this circlet has been broken off, and the head of the cross itself is shattered; but the parts are put together in a very clumsy manner by cement.

accompanying illustration, a well preserved specimen of a "bohogue," having an altar table of masonry. During the penal days "bohogues" or huts of this description served as substitutes for chapels. They afforded accommodation merely for the altar and the celebrant, and were commonly availed of for the celebration of the divine mysteries in many parts of the north of Ireland, even within the memory of persons yet living. The "bohogue" in question is sheltered by a hood-like covering of rubble



masonry, and measures from floor to centre of arch, 7½ feet; width at entrance, about 6 feet; depth, 7½ feet; depth of altar table, 2½ feet. From this old churchyard can be had an extensive and varied view of Lough Erne and its many islands, with the Fermanagh and Leitrim mountains forming an imposing back-ground to a picture, which has hardly a parallel in this land of scenic charms. In the neighbourhood of Templecarne the chief objects of interest are, the fort, or lis, on the summit of Drumawark

Hill, which will be fully explained hereafter; also megalithic remains in the townland of Tamlaght; and a Holy Well in the neighbouring townland of Cullion.

Lough Derg is stated to have been known in ancient Erin under the name of Finloch, or the Fair Lake. That there was another Finloch, where Lough Erne now unfolds its spreading waters, would appear from the following extract taken from O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*:—

> "Fordremanus, Finloch, Lochlurgan, stagna vetusta,
> Quos, quam culta prius, fudit Ierna lacus."

The supposition that it was called originally Finloch appears to rest on the authority of a legend * regarding St. Patrick and the serpent. Should we set aside that legend, it would clearly follow that the name of the lake had been always Lough Derg.

There are two different versions to account for the origin and meaning of the name, Lough Derg. One is founded on a legend which describes how a frightful serpent, spreading terror and destruction far and wide, inhabited this locality; how St. Patrick on his arrival put it to death; and how the water of the lake was dyed red by its blood; and that thus the lake, which was previously

* The legend of the serpent and the change of the name of the lake, in consequence of its death at the hands of "Conan the bold," are referred to in an ancient poem, called the "Finnian Hunt on the borders of Lough Derg," and published in the *Transactions of the Ossianic Society*, Vol. VI., p. 155. I extract the following stanzas:—

"A serpent there was in the Lough of the mountain,
Which caused the slaughter of the Fianna;
Seventy hundred or more
It put to death in one day.
Fionn-loch Deirg was the name
Of this lake, in the beginning, O Just Cleric [*i.e.* St. Patrick];
But Lough Dearg remained since that time,
From the slaughter of the Fianna on that day."

called *Fionn*, *i.e.* fair or clear, came to be called Dearg, which signifies red.*

The above derivation is not accepted by O'Donovan, who pronounces himself incredulous as to those legends and local traditions. He says:—"I am quite satisfied the name of the lake is not *Loch-Dearg*, *i.e.* Red Lough, but *Loch-Deirc*, which means the Lough of the Cave." This opinion derives much confirmation from the way in which it is found written in early notices. It is there called Loch Gerc, and Lough Gerg; and the district in which it lies was called Glinn-Deirg.†

That the waters of Lough Derg bear a reddish tinge ‡ to the present day is beyond all doubt. The cause of this, abstracting from the aforesaid legend, is not far to seek. In the first place, the streams supplying the lake flow over a wide stretch of bog and moorland. In addition to this, numerous chalybeate springs throughout the lake and around its shores are constantly sending forth streams of reddish liquid, thus tinging the lake with a deeper dye. To these mineral springs may be traced

* This legend, though in substance the same, is differently told by O'Donnellan in his notes to the *Four Masters;* by Dr. O'Donovan in his *Donegal Letters*, preserved in the Royal Irish Academy; and in a short notice and sketch from the pen and pencil of Wakeman in the *Pictorial World* of 28th August, 1875.

† The late Rev. John Francis Shearman, in his *Loca Patriciana*, adopts the same view.

‡ The iron tinge imparted to the water, and its agreeable taste when taken in a warm state, led to its being known among the pilgrims by the name of "wine." To the present day this "wine" is the chief beverage used by the pilgrims while engaged in the Station exercises. The large "Copper" formerly used for boiling the lake water, and devoted to that purpose for 150 or 200 years, lies rusting on the island, the modern innovation of boarding houses and tea kettles having discarded its occupation. Being such a useful relic of the past, it has been dignified with being noticed on the Ordnance Map of the island.

much of the healthful and palatable * qualities of the water of Lough Derg.

Reserving for another place a description of the ancient roadways to Lough Derg, as well as of the modern routes to the place, I shall now briefly describe the lake, its islands, its situation and surroundings.

Lough Derg is an extensive sheet of water, covering an area of 2,200 statute acres, with about thirteen miles of circumference. It measures about six miles in length, from the south-eastern extremity near the Ferryhouse, to the river Fluchlynn, which flows into the lake at its north-western boundary; while its greatest width, taken from Portcreevy to the river Derg, which flows from the lake at its north-eastern side, is fully four miles. It is surrounded by a chain of mountains, some of which rise to a considerable elevation above the level of the lake. The Rev. Cæsar Otway, in his *Donegal Sketches*, and † other writers after him, from whom we might expect a more impartial if not so graphic a description, say there is no grandeur in the scenery of Lough Derg, no variety in its outline, its mountains without elevation, its shores without cultivation, and neither tree nor green-spot to relieve the aspect of the place. That this is a very unfair and distorted picture any unprejudiced visitor will readily admit. For, though the aspect of the place is severe and lonely,

* That the remarkable properties of the water of this lake did not escape the observation of former writers is shown by the following extract from Bouillon's translation of Montalvan (Lyon's Ed., Chap. III., p. 88):—

"There is an island in a deep lake in the north of Ireland, the water of which, according to the report of those who have travelled thither, besides its unusual sweetness, possesses the latent virtue of augmenting the natural heat of the stomach."

† In this category may be placed J. B. Doyle's *Tours in Ulster* (Dublin, 1854.)

and thus well becoming the requirements of a penitential retreat, nature has not been sparing of scenic attractions round this "Mystic Island." Here, indeed, you have all the charms of Highland scenery, and much in addition.

The extensive sheet of water, enclosed by rocky shores and studded by numerous islands, presents a view truly picturesque. In the background the mountains form a bold and prominent feature, rising in some cases abruptly from the water's edge, in others gently receding; and, whilst jealously excluding the slightest glimpse of the outer world, they confine the view to the overarching heavens, the true home of the pilgrim. Though heath be here the prevailing robe of nature, the landscape is relieved of much of its wild and stern aspect by occasional patches of trees and shrubs, with many a bright slope and green-sward and wooded island, not to speak of the many hamlets, with cultivated fields, bearing evidence of toil and industry. But above and beyond all, the traditions and associations of the place impart to it a charm and attraction, which no beauty of scenery can supply.

The lake stands about 450 feet above the level of the sea. Its immense basin has retaining capacity for a vast body of water, and so prevents the destructive effects of sudden floods on the lowlands bordering on the river Derg; whilst as a reservoir it must afford water-power for the propelling of endless machinery, when the industrial resources of our country shall come to be developed. Of the mountains, which stand as sentinels round the lake, the highest is Croagh-Kinnagoe, to the south-east, with an elevation of 1,194 feet; Ardmore and Oughtadreen, to the north, 1,086, and 1,071 feet respectively; the mountains to the south and west not reaching an elevation of 1,000 feet.

The chain of hills towards the south of the lake forms

one of the chief water-sheds of this part of the province; all the streams flowing south of this chain fall into Lough Erne, while the streams flowing northward empty into Lough Derg, and thence into the sea at Lough Foyle.

"The basin of the lake is a huge quarry of metamorphic rock, known as schist, upheaved in ages azoic by some fiery agent, so that the stratification is now almost perpendicular to the surface. It crops up all round the shore, and through the lake, into numerous rocky islets and hidden reefs, whose projecting points are sharp as iron spikes, and render the navigation of the lake a matter of great caution." *

Lough Derg consists of two large sheets of water, which may be termed the upper and lower lakes, connected by three channels, formed by Saints' Island, and an islet lying north of it, latterly known as "Wildgoose Lodge."

The chief streams flowing into Lough Derg are the rivers Fluchlynn † and Barderg, which empty into the upper lake towards its western extremity.

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* See an able article in the *Irish Monthly*, January 1878, from the scholarly pen of Bishop Healy.

† The visitor to Lough Derg will be greatly pleased by a trip to the river Fluchlynn, and by following the course of that rivulet for some distance towards its source in Augh Keen mountain. Especially after a rainfall does it appear to advantage, rushing with great force down steep precipices. The rocks, through which it has cut its passage, present some fine crystallizations and semi-transparent felspar, while here and there rare plants of the genus *flora* delight the eye. On reaching the very summit of the mountain the scene that meets the view defies description. Northwards stretches the Blue Stack range of mountains, with Slieve League peering out at its western extremity. Westward sparkle in the sun the waves on the broad Bay of Donegal. Rounding southwards we see the Sligo and Leitrim mountains with the familiar and frowning cliffs of Benbulben. Whilst completing the circle, we have a full view of holy Lough Derg nestling in peaceful solitude at our feet, and inviting us to speed our return to its penitential island.

Lough Derg is bespangled with numerous and picturesque islands, some crowned with shady trees and shrubs, some bared to the mountain breezes. The principal of these islands are Inishgoosk (now called Bilberry Island), Saints' Island, Station Island, Friars' Island, Allingham Island, Kelly's Isles, Goat Islands, near the river Fluchlynn; Derg-More Island, Derg-Beg Island, near the mouth of the river Barderg; Trough Island and Bull's Island. In addition to these are several other islets with no particular designation. For the most part they are mere groups of barren rocks, where cranes, cormorants and sea-gulls nestle, imparting by their wild and plaintive screams a lonely and romantic charm to this penitential retreat.

Saints' Island would appear to have been sometimes called St. Fintan's Island, but the name by which it was generally known during the early Christian ages was St. Dabheoc's Island. Of the islands above enumerated Inishgoosk bears the most Celtic sound, and it may be taken to mean the island of the creek or cove, on account of its formation at the western side. In point of extent or area, Inishgoosk is the largest of the islands of Lough Derg, containing 13 acres, 2 roods, and 24 perches; while Station Island ranks but eleventh, as it comprises only 3 roods and 26 perches, statute measure.* In point, however, of historical interest and celebrity, Station Island occupies the foremost place, Saints' Island ranks next in importance, while the other islands† of Lough Derg merit little attention on the part of the pilgrim or historian.

Lough Derg, 'mid its surroundings of mountain and

* During dry seasons the measurements of these islands will show a larger area.

† In the entire lake are 46 islands, the combined area of which is 55 acres.

moorland, presents from all points of view a singularly unique and pleasing prospect. There, as if floating on the surface of its waters, sits Station Island, with its neat churches and presbytery, its handsome and commodious hospice, and the various other buildings, with which, in the distance, it seems to be completely occupied: whilst the picture is heightened by the crowds of ardent votaries, moving about on the island, engaged in their devotional exercises, and the boats plying hither and thither with their freight of coming or departing pilgrims. A sight so sacred and solemn, and so novel to the beholder, is calculated to make the deepest impression on his mind, and to call up in after-life the most pleasing memories. The view of mountain, lake and island, so harmoniously blended, fascinate the eye of the pilgrim. His step becomes, as it were, spell-bound; for he instinctively feels that the island, which at length meets his gaze, is sacred ground:—

"So like a temple doth it stand, that there
The heart's first impulse is to prayer."

Great, indeed, is the natural aptitude of the place for its sacred purpose. Solitude, so dear to the servants of God, there reigns supreme. The surrounding mountains stand like huge sentinels round this island sanctuary, forming at the same time a barrier against the contaminating influences of the outer world. The late T. D. M'Gee, in a poem entitled "Dream Journeys," thus crystallises the thought:—

"The sacred strand our fathers' feet
Have often trod, I nightly view,
The island of the Saint's retreat
Amid the mountains of Tyrhugh."

CHAPTER IV.

SAINTS' ISLAND—ITS EXTENT AND APPEARANCE—SITE OF ST. DABHEOC'S MONASTERY.

TWO miles north-west of Station Island lies Saints' Island, anciently called Oileán-na-naomh, and more anciently still, St. Dabheoc's Island. In pre-Reformation times there stood on Saints' Island a venerable convent of Augustinian monks. The island is oval in form, and rises on every side in gentle gradation from the lake, its highest elevation being about fifty feet above water level.

Saints' Island bears evident traces of tillage, and of having been turned to profitable account in the days when the Canons Regular of St. Augustine were denizens of the place. Even the soil of the island seems to have shared in the ruin and desolation with which ruthless hands visited its churches and cloisters. It is overgrown with coarse herbage, ferns and rushes; while on the western side especially a thick growth of heather shows it to have relapsed into its original wild state. Luxuriant weeds shadow the ruins of the sacred enclosures, church, monastery and cemetery. The island has few trees * or shrubs, if we except some slender ash trees, and some venerable hawthorns, which are truly remarkable for their hoary and aged look. A dense cluster of hawthorns shelters the

* It is said the "lord of the soil," when planting Ballymacavanny hill, near the ferryhouse, had it in contemplation not only to "afforest" Saints' Island, but also to erect a shooting lodge thereon. Fortunately, neither scheme has been put into execution.

ruins of the monastery at the eastern extremity of the island; and, from the gray dark moss adhering to their branches, they appear to date from the time those buildings were destroyed.

On the southern slope of the island were situated the convent gardens, which are still easily discernible from their enclosures, as well as from their superior fertility. In winter those gardens present a more striking contrast with the rest of the island by reason of their verdure. Flowers, too, and herbs are known to grow there which are not to be found throughout the surrounding islands and mountains.

The eastern half of the island was laid out in fields, as the remains of strong earthen fences or enclosures denote. A numerous colony of rabbits burrow in those fences, and as they skip about in every direction contribute not a little "to lend enchantment to the scene."

The western half of the island appears to have been used as a "common" for pasturage. The soil here, from exposure to western storms, seems very poor; still, though in great part overgrown with heath and rushes, its furrowed surface bears indications of its having yielded to the spade and ploughshare. The grass and hay grown on Saints' Island are said to be so rank and unwholesome as to be most noxious to cattle. Formerly, I have been informed, cattle and sheep were put to graze there, but the mortality which set in among them awakened their owners to the dangers of the situation. And thus, fortunately, the sacred precincts and ruins on Saints' Island are no longer trampled upon and profaned by the beasts of the field, which elsewhere in so many instances have inflicted sad injury upon the ancient monuments of our country.

In the early ages of the faith in Ireland there prevailed

a custom, borrowed from the Pagan period, of erecting a circular earthen fort, or enclosure, close to, but more frequently round the religious houses. Thus in Father O'Hanlon's Life of St. Fanchea (*Lives of the Irish Saints*, Vol. I.), we read how her brother St. Endeus raised with his own hands around his sister's nunnery at Rossory in Fermanagh a large mun, or earthwork, strengthened by deep circular fosses, the remains of which are still to be seen. And Wakeman, in his *Antiquities of Devenish*, says that nearly all the primitive church-sites in Fermanagh bear traces of such circumvallations. From personal observation, at least as to several of them, I can fully endorse that statement. Near the Abbey of Devenish, on Lough Erne, stood a strongly fortified *rath*, remains of which are still evident. The same may be said of Rossory, Iniskeen, Aghalurcher, etc. Outside Fermanagh the same custom equally prevailed. At Clogher and Clones religious houses were founded, for economy sake, beside pre-existing forts. A circular earthwork of this class exists near the summit of Saints' Island, and adjoining the cemetery at its western side. It is intersected by the western boundary wall of the cemetery, but enough of this primitive construction yet remains outside that enclosure to leave little room for doubt as to its character and purpose. From careful investigation I find, judging from the western part of the lip, which is still intact, that its shape, like that of the island itself, was elliptical. The portion outside the cemetery measures 65 yards in circumference. A lesser arc of this oval enclosure lies within the cemetery, the boundary wall of which measures 31 yards, and this may be taken as the diameter of the original fort. The measurements of the cemetery are thus 31 yards in length, and its width 27 yards. Within the portion of

the lip still extant, we may infer the cells of the monks were erected; and in that part of it enclosed within the cemetery the church founded by St. Dabheoc stood, the ruined cell * or oratory yet visible, though in a very ruinous state, marking in all likelihood the tomb of St. Dabheoc himself. Within this same tomb, may we reasonably infer, sleep the remains of many of the saints and abbots of this island hermitage. Three aged thorn bushes (besides which there are no other trees or shrubs in the cemetery), one on the eastern and two on the west side of the oratory or mortuary chapel, shelter the saints' remains, as if with providential care, and tend to point out the place where they await the final resurrection.

It appears strange, indeed, that this interesting object escaped the notice of the Ordnance Survey Party, and even of Dr. O'Donovan † himself, who visited the island in 1835. Had he devoted more of his time and attention to this locality, much that is now hopelessly lost, or left to conjecture, might have been brought to light.

I entertain a firm conviction that the monastery founded by St. Dabheoc on Saints' Island stood within this very earthen fort, and that here his order flourished from the time of St. Patrick until the introduction of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine.

* Before the demolition of the buildings on Saints' Island by orders of the Government in 1632, we may suppose that St. Dabheoc's Oratory was a well-preserved and sightly edifice, mayhap stone-roofed, and not unlike the still-existing oratory of St. Molaise in the island of Inishmurray, off the coast of Sligo.

† He came to Lough Derg, as he tells us in his *Donegal Letters*, on the 28th October 1835, and on Hallow-eve following, he wrote from Ballyshannon an account of his visit to the lake, "having derived," as he wittily remarks, "no other benefit from his *turas* save a severe cold."

The purpose of those earthen circumvallations seems to have been, 1st, to shelter the religious houses from the storms; 2nd, to serve as places of observation within which watch and vigil might be kept; and 3rd, as keeps and fortifications against marauding parties. We need not be surprised that so few remains—nay, even traces—of the original monastery are extant when we take into account that most of the religious edifices of the period were built of wood. On this subject, Dr. Lanigan, in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland* (Vol. IV., p. 391). writes:—

"Prior to the twelfth century the general fashion was to erect their buildings of wood, a fashion which in great part continues to this very day in several parts of Europe. As, consequently, their churches were usually built of wood, it cannot be expected that there should be any remains of such churches at present."

With regard to the plan and arrangement of the ancient Irish monasteries, I cannot do better than submit the remarks of the learned antiquary, Dr. Petrie, who in his *Round Towers*, p. 146, says:—

"It is clear that in the earliest monastic establishments in Ireland, the abbot, clergy, and monks had each their separate cells, which served as habitations; and that such other houses, as the house for the reception of strangers, the kitchen, etc., were all separate edifices, surrounded by a *cashel*, or circular wall, and forming a kind of monastery or ecclesiastical town, like those of the Christians in the East; and known among the Egyptians by the name of Laura."

Around Saints' Island there is an air of loneliness and desolation which is painfully affecting. Silence still as death reigns over its sacred precincts, where once the prayer of the pilgrim and the pious chant of the monks

'mid ceremony and sacrifice resounded. Of this island we may repeat with truth what was said of "Arran of the Saints," that the living God only knows the number of holy ones who here await the resurrection of the just.

Standing on this holy spot, for centuries the home of St. Dabheoc's monks, for centuries later the abode of St. Augustine's Canons, and looking out on the sanctuary of St. Patrick's Purgatory, which during the middle ages became "the most famous shrine of penance and purification in Western Europe," the prayer of Eman Oge (Poems by D'Arcy M'Gee), recurs to memory:—

"God of this Irish isle,
Sacred and old,
Bright in the morning smile
Is the lake's fold;
Here where Thy Saints have trod,
Here where they prayed,
Hear me, O saving God!
May I be saved!"

CHAPTER V.

ST. PATRICK AT LOUGH DERG—MEMORIALS OF HIM PRESERVED THERE—ST. DABHEOC—HIS GENEALOGY—HIS AUSTERITIES—HIS PROPHECY REGARDING ST. COLUMBA—TRADITIONS OF HIM AT LOUGH DERG.

IT is a question much controverted among Irish hagiologists, whether St. Patrick, our national Apostle, ever visited Lough Derg; and if so, whether the pilgrimage takes its origin from him, or from another saint of the same name, called Patrick Junior, or the Abbot Patrick, who flourished, according to the authority of Sir James Ware, about the year 850.

We may admit, with O'Donovan, that there does not exist historical or written evidence of St. Patrick's visit to Lough Derg; but it would be rash to conclude from the want of such evidence that he did not visit it. In the absence of positive historical records, there are grounds of presumption so strong as to bring with them conviction. In the first place, there exists a vivid and continuous tradition, that he visited it for deeds of penance, for retreat and silent prayer; and, seeing that the Irish race have always regarded their patron saint with the most affectionate veneration, and have carefully treasured up, and handed down from generation to generation, the minutest particulars regarding his life and labours, we should attach great importance to this tradition.

Again, Dr. Lanigan records how St. Patrick, being in Tyrconnell, went back eastwards towards Lough Erne.

As this course would conduct through the very locality in which Lough Derg is situated, may we not suppose that he then visited it, saw its suitability for a place of retirement and penitential exercises, and that he there and then inaugurated it as such. The words of an old office of St. Patrick, give colour to such a supposition:—"*Hic est doctor benevolus, Hibernicorum Apostolus, cui loca purgatoria ostendit Dei gratia;*" *i.e.* that God, by a special favour, pointed out to St. Patrick certain places adapted for penitential exercises, such as Lough Derg certainly is.

St. Patrick's sojourn in this locality is thus described in the *Vita Tripartita*, Part II., where it is said:—"St. Patrick went to Es-Ruaidh. He desired to establish himself there, where Disert-Patrick is and Lec-Patrick. Cairbre opposed him, and sent two of his people, whose names were Carbacc and Cuangus, to seize his hands. 'Not good is what you do,' said Patrick; 'if I were permitted to found a place here, the second to Rome of Latium, with its Tiber running through it, would be my establishment with its Es-Ruaidh through it; and your descendants would be comarbs in it.'" After leaving Ballyshannon, St. Patrick proceeded through Tyrhugh, in which Lough Derg lies, on his way northwards. The journey is thus mentioned in the Tripartite Life of the Saint:—

"After Patrick had blessed the Cinel-Conaill, and had left a blessing on their forts and rivers and churches, he went into the country of Eoghan, the son of Niall, across Bernas of Tir-Aedha into Magh-Ita." On this journey it is not unlikely that he visited Teach-Dabheoc on Lough Derg. And, as his visits to that retreat were chiefly for the purpose of self-mortification and penance, we need not wonder if, through a sense of humility, he made no allu-

sion to his prayer and fasting in that desert-place, where, like another Moses, he renewed his strength to guide his people on their mortal pilgrimage to the promised land.

Furthermore, the constant devotion to St. Patrick observed at this pilgrimage, the church there dedicated to him, his cross, his cave, his bed of hard penance, the name which has been universally assigned to the pilgrimage, viz., St. Patrick's Purgatory,* are all so many traditions and proofs in favour of his having hallowed by his presence this retreat, and of having originated those penitential exercises which the pious votaries to its shrine have ever since so lovingly practised.

Although the narrative of the monk Henry of Saltrey contains many exaggerations, his statement with regard to St. Patrick's connexion with this pilgrimage cannot be lightly set aside. Henry lived in the twelfth century,

* Reference has been already made to a Life of St. Patrick written in Spanish by Jehan Perez de Monteluan, and translated into French by two writers, who evidently were unaware of each other's labours in the same field. One of these was Père Bouillon—a Franciscan, whose translation was published at Lyons in 1674. The other merely gives the initials "F. A. S." *Chartreuse a Bruxelles* (1659). It would be an interesting study to compare the translations of both, which widely differ in many respects. In both of these versions is to be found a verse of a Latin hymn, which the Irish Church used to chant in memory of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and of which the "Farewell Hymn to Lough Derg," latterly in vogue, may be regarded as the counterpart. In the Brussels translation a French rendering of the Latin hymn is added. The Latin hymn and its French version are here set forth in order:—

"*Magni Patris sunt miranda merita Patricii:*
Cui Dominus ostendit locum Purgatorii.
Quo viventes se expurgent delinquentes filii."

"*Cette cave est le lieu, que Patrice jadis,*
A reçeu et laissé pour veoir le Purgatoire:
Qui en fort est tout net, et non moins plein de gloire,
D'avoir vaincu l'enfer et veu le Paradis."

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and related what he had heard from Gilbert of Lud, and chiefly the wonderful things that had happened to Owen, an Irish soldier, who was courageous enough to enter this cave. Henry of Saltrey says:—"The Lord brought St. Patrick into a desert-place, and there showed him a round cave, dark within. . . . . And since the pilgrim is there purged of his sins, the place is named the Purgatory of St. Patrick."

Also, it may be added, that St. Patrick has been always referred to as the founder of this penitential retreat. Now, whenever St. Patrick is referred to simply, and without any qualifying epithet, it is our national Apostle that is meant; whilst the other Patrick is always called, as if to distinguish him from the Apostle of Ireland, the "Abbot Patrick," or "Patrick Junior."

The question as to whether the pilgrimage takes its origin from St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, hinges on the fact of his actual visit to Lough Derg. For if, as we hold for certain, our patron saint did visit the place, then it is fair to suppose that his spiritual children flocked thither subsequently to follow his example in the austerities he there practised, thus constituting it a place of pilgrimage.

In a rare work, called *Vita Sti. Patritii a Jacobo de Voragine, seu Lombardica Historia* (printed at Nuremberg, anno 1482), the following is given as the origin of the pilgrimage:—

"*Cum beatus Patritius per Hiberniam prædicaret et fructum permodicum faceret, rogavit Dominum ut aliquod signum ostenderet per quod vel territi pœniterent. Jussu igitur Dei circulum magnum in quodam loco cum baculo designavit, et ecce terra intra circulum se aperuit, et puteus magnus et profundissimus ibidem apparuit. Revelatumque est beato Patritio quod ibidem quidem purgatorii locus esset, in quem quisquis vellet descendere, alia sibi pœnitentia*

non restaret, nec aliud pro peccatis purgatorium sentiret. Plerique autem inde non redirent, et quot redirent eos a mane usque in sequens mane ibidem moram facere oporteret. Multi igitur ingrediebantur qui de cætero non revertebant."

That the place became famous as a hermitage and place of penance long anterior to the time of the Abbot Patrick is sufficiently clear from this fact alone, that the names of two, probably three, of its abbots are on record (St. Dabheoc, St. Cillene, and St. Avil or Abel), who governed it in earlier times. As to St. Dabheoc,* Colgan says St. Patrick left him at Lough Derg, in Donegal, in charge of a church, which in subsequent ages became famed as the Purgatory of St. Patrick. And the Rev. John Francis Shearman, in his learned work, styled *Loca Patriciana*, says, "that Colgan's statement about Dabheoc is well-founded; for, when St. Kevin was at the school of his relative, Bishop Eoghan of Ardstra, St. Dabheoc, or Bioc, then in extreme old age, paid frequent visits to this seminary" at Ardstraw, which he could easily do, owing to the proximity of his retreat at Lough Derg. Hence, while the weight of authority forces us to infer that this penitential retreat was originated by St. Patrick, it may be said that his disciple St. Dabheoc, by his severe penances and austerities, imparted great celebrity to this retreat and further attraction to its pilgrimage.

Of him Colgan writes:—"He is called *Dabheocus* in general, and often *Beoanus* in Latin. He is the patron of a very celebrated church in a certain lake in Ulster, called Loch-Gerg, in which is that celebrated Purgatory of St. Patrick, whence either the lake itself, or the place in which it lies, is called Gleann-Gerc, where in the adjacent country

* Dabheoc, when divested of its adjuncts *mo* and *oc* is the same as Aedh, or Hugh. In the *Martyrology of Tallagh* under January 1st, the entry is given thus, "Aedh, Lochaderg, *alias* Dabheoc."

St. Dabheocus is held in the greatest veneration to the present day, and his festivity is observed three days in every year, according to our Festilogies, viz., on the 1st of January, 24th of July, and 16th of December. The Calendar of Cashel places his festival day only on the 15th December. It is related in the beginning of the Irish Life that he had foretold several things about the holiness and virtues of St. Columba many years before the latter was born, from which it follows that he flourished in the time of St. Patrick. He is ranked among the chief saints of Ireland by Cummian."

Colgan traces the pedigree of St. Dabheoc to Dichu, St. Patrick's first convert, from which he infers that he was of the race of the *Dalfiatachs*, and that his country lay about Lecale, in Down. Other authorities trace his lineage and birthplace to Wales.

It appears, however, there were two saints of the name of Dabheoc, one of them being Dabheoc, son of Bracan, a Cambrian. His parentage is thus given by Canon O'Hanlon, *Lives of the Irish Saints* (Vol. I., No. 1): "St. Dabheog was the son of Brecan, or Bracan, who ruled over a territory in Wales, formerly denominated Brechonia, or Brechinia. The parents of Bracan were his father Bracha, or Bracmeoc, an Irish-born prince, and Marcella, a noble British lady." It must have been the Cambrian St. Dabheog who predicted the birth of St. Columba, born 7th December 521. Father O'Hanlon narrates the prediction in his work already referred to, thus:—"When St. Dabeog had here" (probably at Lough Derg) "protracted his vigils to a late hour one night, in company with his clerics, a wonderful brightness appeared towards the northern part of the horizon. The clerics asked their master what it portended. 'In that direction, whence you have seen the brilliant illumination,' said

Dabheoc, 'the Lord Himself at a future time shall light a burning lamp, which, by its brightness, must miraculously glorify the Church of Christ. This shall be Columba, the son of Feidlimid, son of Fergus, and whose mother shall be Ethnea. For learning he shall be distinguished; in body and soul shall he be chaste; and he shall possess the gift of prophecy.'" This St. Dabheoc * was brother to St. Canoc, who lived towards the close of the fifth century. The Cambrian St. Dabheoc it was who was the contemporary, and probably the disciple, of St. Patrick; and it is very likely he lived at Lough Derg, and fixed his habitation on Saints' Island, long known as St. Dabheoc's Island.

The special patron, however, of Lough Derg was the Irish St. Dabheoc, who flourished about the year 610. The late Father Shearman, following the authority of Colgan, thus gives the pedigree of Dabheoc: —

Trichim | of the *Dalfiatach*

Dichu | converted by St. Patrick, circa 450, afterwards a monk

Derblis

Tala

Dibrogh

Luanim |

Beoan or Dabheoc

* Father Shearman suggests that "Bioc, or Beoanus (October 26th or 28th), of Glen-Geirg, is perhaps the same as Beoan, bishop of Tamlact M'Nainn" (there is a Tamlaght near Lough Derg, but *M'Nainn* would suggest some place near Lough M'Nean), "and of *Loch Brictenn* (Lough Brickland?)."

The genealogy of the Saint is also given in the *Naemsenchus* Leabhar Breac thus:—

"Dabeog glinoi gerig tra
Mac Luanim Mc Dibroga
Mc Tala Mc Dirblir ril
Mc Dicon For Mc Tuchim."

It is manifest from the foregoing genealogy that Saint Dabheoc, patron of Lough Derg, must have lived about the close of the sixth, or beginning of the seventh century, since four generations intervene between him and Dichu, St. Patrick's first convert. To the austerities practised by this saint, Cummian of Connor refers in a poem on the characteristic virtues of the Irish Saints. This poem, with its English version, may be found in the *Martyrology of Tallagh*, edited by the late Rev. Mathew Kelly, D.D., of Maynooth College. The stanza on Dabheoc runs thus:—

"Mobheog,* the gifted, loved,
According to the synod of the learned,
That often in bowing his head,
He plunged it under water."

It is worthy of remark that the aforesaid penitential act has been practised for many centuries at our pilgrimage: even still it is performed by the pilgrims in a modified way.

Next to St. Patrick, the special patron of Lough Derg is St. Dabheoc. There were three feasts annually observed at Lough Derg in his honour—on the 1st of January, the 24th of July, and the 16th of December respectively.

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* Mobheoc is the same as Dabheoc; *mo* and *do* being prefixes denoting affection, and meaning "my Beoc," or my little *Aedh*, or Hugh, the affix *og* signifying young, or little. These particles are often found in connection with the names of Irish saints.

Those festivals commemorated three important epochs in his career—probably his birth, his installation as abbot, and his holy death. Down to Father John Colgan's time those three festivals seem to have been observed in the neighbouring districts, as well as on the island itself, but for the past two centuries they have fallen into disuse. At the present day, indeed, the only one of those festivals which might be observed is that of the 24th of July, as during the occurrence of the others the island is unfrequented.

We have already seen that the site of the monastery, founded here by St. Dabheoc, is marked by the old tip, which is still discernible on Saints' Island. The name of St. Dabheoc is perpetuated in the townland denomination of Seeavoc, a townland bordering on the southern extremity of the lake. Seeavoc (ʃuiohe ᵭabheoᵹ) signifies St. Dabheoc's seat; and this stone seat may yet be seen in the vicinity of the lake. It is marked on the Ordnance Map of the townland. The way towards it is difficult and precipitous. Sailing from Station Island, or from the ferry-house, to the south-western expansion of the lake, the visitor will observe a little quay, or landing-place, about midway between "St. Bridget's Chair" and Portcreevy. Ascending in a direct line from this point up the mountain-side, he will reach a cairn-shaped mound on the summit of the mountain. Here may be observed a stone seat having a grave-like opening* immediately in front of it. The "seat" stands at the northern end of this opening, and has a southern aspect, so that, being seated therein, you should have Lough Derg behind you, and in front a view of Lough Erne. The sides of the

* The cavity, or pit in front of "St. Dabheoc's Seat," measures in length 3 feet; in depth it is 2 feet 8 inches; its average width is 2 feet; but the opening gradually slopes to a width of one foot at the bottom.

opening are built up with large stones, which in process of time have slided inward, reducing the enclosed space so much that at present one person can kneel there only with some difficulty. The earthwork rises higher on the western side of the "seat," probably to afford shelter from the Atlantic breezes; and there must have been originally a hood or covering over it to protect the occupant from the storms to be met with at such an elevation. Sitting in

this recess the lake lies in the background, whilst the view in front embraces the mountain range running southward to Lough Erne, with the valley along which the ancient roadway to the pilgrimage wound its way. Standing up, however, and looking northward, we have a full view of Lough Derg, and no better standpoint can be found for a clear and comprehensive survey of the sanctuary and all its surroundings.

At the period to which this "seat" is attributed the habitations of the Irish were very rude. Cave-like and beehive-shaped constructions (traces of which are still to be seen along the western coast of Ireland) were used as places of abode by the anchorets of the period. The shape of the "seat," and its antique mode of construction are the best evidences of its antiquity, and of its having been used by St. Dabheoc for the two-fold purpose of a seat, or retired place of meditation, and of a cave in which to do penance. At this early period not only was veneration paid to the saint's cell, but also to his cross, his bed of penance, and his cave. Thus we learn that amongst the objects connected with St. Kevin in the County of Wicklow, his cave at Glendalough is yet traditionally venerated. On this mountain top at Lough Derg the holy Dabheoc detached himself from earthly considerations, and drew nearer to his Creator by the exercise of works of penance and mortification, which were hidden indeed from the eyes of his fellow-men, but recorded in the Register of God.

We need not wonder that the saints so loved to fix their haunts among mountains, seeing that they are such fitting types of power and sublimity. Of old Noah's Ark rested on a mountain summit. The Psalmist wept for Jonathan slain on his own mountains, and he sighed incessantly for "the everlasting hills." Our Divine Saviour also loved to retire to mountain regions, and Horeb, Thabor, Sion, and Calvary witnessed some of the most memorable and sacred events in His life. Mountains look down unchanged upon the changes occurring in everything around. They tend to elevate the soul above the passing scene of this world, and ever beckon upwards to the Eternal Hills—the true home of the pilgrim.

St. Dabheoc's seat gave rise to the denomination

Seeavoc, the name by which the district in which it lies was anciently known. Subsequently the district was divided into sub-denominations—*Portneillinmore* (*i.e.* the harbour of the large island), *Portcreevy* (*i.e.* the bushy harbour), and *Ballymacavanny*, the present name of the townland in which the "seat" is situated. That the latter names are of comparatively modern date it is not difficult to conjecture; whereas the term *Seeavoc* seems to be as old as the days of St. Dabheoc himself.

On Station Island may be seen the fragment of an ancient stone cross,* a representation of which is included in the illustration of St. Patrick's Cross given in this work. Mr. Wakeman, to whom is due the credit of being the first who bestowed more than a passing look at this important object, states that it is much older than St. Patrick's Cross, and, judging from the style of art displayed on it, it must date as far back as the sixth or seventh century. This fragment belonged, in all likelihood, to St. Dabheoc's Cross, and was primarily erected on Saints' Island, probably at his grave. Only the head and arms of the cross now remain to us; the shaft, which must have measured about five feet, having been broken off close by the arms. The shaft is now nowhere to be seen; and we have been informed by the Prior, Very Rev. James Canon M'Kenna, P.P., Brookeborough, a clergyman long and intimately connected with Lough Derg, that whilst

* The measurements of this mutilated cross are — head, 1 foot; arms, 1 foot 9 inches; width of stone, 6 inches; depth, 4 inches. At each of the four points of intersection there is a hollow cutting like the concave arc of a circle, which is but rarely found on old crosses, and only on those of the earliest date. The circle, instead of entwining the arms, as in the case of modern Celtic crosses, is raised in relief on the disc or space between the arms. In the absence of this clasping circle, it presents, together with the hollow cutting at each of the angles, a striking resemblance to the old cross of Kilbroney, near Rostrevor.

"engaged in rebuilding the presbytery in 1864, and being badly off for stones long enough to make door and window lintels, the workmen pointed out him a stone about 3 feet 8 inches long, about 8 inches square at one end, and about 5 inches square at the other, which he ordered to have placed for a lintel, but over what door or window he does not recollect. Subsequently, on examining the head of the cross and considering the peculiarity of the stone, the idea struck him that the 'lintel' must have been its counterpart."

The stone, of which this cross is formed is schist,* which, with mica-slate, is the quality of stone commonly found in the vicinity of the lake; the supposition being that, at this early period, the freestone quarries near Pettigo, from which the other inscribed stones at Lough Derg were taken, had not then been available.

In the space included between the arms, head, and shaft of this cross, there is on both sides a raised circlet, which is about 4 inches in diameter. This circle may be taken as an emblem of eternity; or as expressive of the catholicity and universality of the Church; or, what is more likely, as a symbolical representation of the Holy Eucharist, which in the early ages of the faith used to be expressed by such symbols. This was the original form of the circle, which is now so commonly seen entwining the arms of our beautiful Celtic crosses.

Hitherto this mutilated cross was kept in the centre of one of the "beds," or cells on Station Island, a fact which shows the great veneration attached to it, and the care with which it has been preserved.

The original site of this cross, which we may designate

* The mica-schist of Lough Derg sparkles with a copious blend of felspar, a mineral which abounds in this part of Ireland, and which is largely availed of in the manufacture of the celebrated Belleek ware.

the Cross of St. Dabheoc, was probably at the saint's grave * within the cemetery on Saints' Island, now a scene of deplorable ruin and desolation.

How long St. Dabheoc lived at Lough Derg, or in what year he died, has not been ascertained. Assuming that the two saints of that name, the Cambrian and Ultonian, had both lived at Lough Derg (and we see no reason to doubt that supposition), it would appear the Cambrian St. Dabheoc died during the early part of the sixth century, and before the birth of St. Columba, which event he predicted. Hence, if we follow the common belief that 490 was the date of St. Dabheoc's arrival at Lough Derg, and 516 or 517 as the date of his demise, we shall have over twenty-five years, during which the saint in his secluded island retreat pointed out to the newly-converted Irish nation the bright example of a penitential life.

We may safely conjecture that Dabheoc's was one of the eight monastic orders belonging to the early Church in Ireland; for, it is stated in the life of St. Ciaran of Clonmacnoise, that the order of St. Molaisre of Devinish was one of the eight orders in Erin, and that after completing thirty years, Molaisre went to heaven, A.D. 563. The memory of Molaisre is venerated on the 12th of September in the Martyrology, where Aengus says:—"With the feast of Laisren,† the beautiful, of multitudinous Devenish." Speaking of St. Laserian, Sir James Ware says, that he instituted a particular monastic rule, but that his successors took the rule of St. Augustine. It may have been that St. Molaisre adopted the rule of

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* In the *Monasticon Hibernicon* (edited by the Most Rev. Dr. Moran), it is said that St. Dabheoc was buried in the abbey, which stood on Saints' Island.

† Molaise, Molaisre, Laisre, and Laserian are but different forms of the same name.

St. Dabheoc, who was almost his contemporary, and whose monastic house at that time was the most distinguished in the neighbourhood. Besides, we may reasonably suppose that there continued to exist close intercourse from the very beginning, as if they were branches of the same religious order, between the establishments of Lough Derg and Devinish. In after ages, when Imar, Archbishop of Armagh, had introduced the Canons Regular of St. Augustine to his church and abbey of SS. Peter and Paul at Armagh, built about the year 1126, Devenish and Saints' Island, which had been laid desolate by the Danes, were both re-peopled by religious of that order. And thus the fraternity, existing from the beginning between Devenish and Lough Derg, continued on down during the middle ages.

Nor should I forget to add that one of the penitential circles, or "beds" on Station Island, round which the pilgrims proceed while reciting certain prayers, is the Bed of St. Dabheoc. It is marked on a map of the place, published in Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland* (London, 1672), and is there called *lectus vel circulus Abogi*, which latter is a corrupt form for *Dabogi*, or Dabheoc. To the saint's "cross," "seat," "cave," and "bed," special veneration has been always paid, these objects being so intimately connected with the devotions and austerities of the holy hermit.

Notwithstanding the almost total absence of historical evidence regarding St. Dabheoc,* the saint's memory has

* Regarding the second St. Dabheoc, or Beoan, of Lough Derg, the following extract from a legend given in the *Leabhar na h-Uidhri*, will be interesting: —"It happened that St. Comgall of Bangor despatched Beon, son of Innli, of *Teach Daboc*, to Rome, on a message to Gregory [Pope, A.D. 590-604], to receive order and rule." A fabulous story is there told of Liban, daughter of Eachaidh, son of Muiredach, having

been vividly preserved at Lough Derg, and finds expression in the perennial devotion of the pilgrims towards him. The connection of his name with all the surroundings of the pilgrimage gives imperishable proof of the veneration in which his virtues and memory have been held. And thus are preserved, for the edification of remote generations, the lives and deeds of those faithful servants of God, who, abandoning the world, and in the solitude of retreat, devoted themselves wholly to the divine service, and to the observance of the evangelical counsels.

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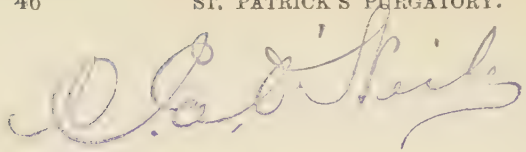
been metamorphosed into a salmon, caught in a net on the return of Beoan from Rome, and drawn by wild oxen from *Carn Airend*, now Carnearney, parish of Connor, Co. Antrim, to *Teach Dabeog*, where she was baptised by Comgall, with the name *Muirgen*, *i.e.* "born of the sea." Another name for her was *Fuinchi*. This legend is given at length in Dr. Reeves' *Down and Connor*, p. 376. From it we can learn, making due allowance for fable, the parentage of St. Beoanus, or Dabheoc, the period at which he lived, and his journey to Rome to have his rule confirmed by Pope Gregory; we also learn that a monastery stood here at that time; and that it was founded by St. Patrick, the name itself would imply, seeing that the other foundations, styled *Teach*, were established by him. In proof of this may be adduced the following passage from the Tripartite Life, Part III., not to mention other similar passages:—"Patrick did not visit Ardmacha on that occasion, but went into the territory of Hy-Cremthand, where he founded churches and *teacha*," *i.e.* religious communities, or foundations.



CHAPTER VI.

TERMON-DABHEOC — ITS TERMON-CROSSES — SUCCESSORS OF ST. DABHEOC — ST. BRIGID — ANCIENT ROADWAY TO LOUGH DERG.

THE patrimony devoted by our pious ancestors towards the use and support of the religious foundation on Lough Derg, was known during many centuries under the name of Termon-Dabheoc. In the course of time the name extended itself to the entire parish, in which Lough Derg is situated; and thus we find in a list of the parishes of the diocese of Clogher, with the taxation of each, which was received into the Exchequer in the sixteenth year of Edward II. (1323), Termon-Dabheoc set down as one of the churches in the decanate of Lougherny (*i.e.* Lough Erne), now the deanery of Enniskillen. For the past four centuries, however, the churchlands are called Termon Magrath, after the family that became hereditary termoners, or guardians of this sanctuary and its possessions. Those termonlands are very extensive, and their rental at the present day is said to exceed £5,000 per annum. The limits of this ecclesiastical endowment were originally marked by termon-crosses; and vestiges of those crosses and other termon marks are still discernible. Relative to termon-crosses, Dr. Lanigan writes (Vol. IV., p. 386):—"We find some canons relative to ecclesiastical lands, or tracts, called *terminus*, and their boundaries or marks. 'Let the *terminus* of a holy place have marks about it.

Wherever you find the sign of the Cross of Christ, do not do any injury. Three persons consecrate a *terminus* of a holy place, a king, a bishop, and the people.' It appears that crosses might be erected in such holy places, and that this might have been done by either a king, a bishop, or the people."

Though termonlands did not possess the right of sanctuary, strictly so-called, the same as churches and religious houses, yet they were favoured with different immunities and privileges, such as for instance freedom from impost of taxes by the civil authorities, etc.

Regarding Termon-Dabheoc the following entries are to be found in the Annals of the Four Masters :—

"A.D. 1196. The son of Blosky O'Carrin plundered Termon-Dabheoc; but in a month afterwards he himself was slain, and his people were dreadfully slaughtered, through the miracles of God and St. Daveog."

"1345. Nicholas Magrath, coarb of Termon-Daveog, died."

"1395. Donnell, *i.e.* O'Muldoon of Lurg, was treacherously taken prisoner by the sons of Art Maguire at Termon-Daveog, and delivered up as a captive to O'Donnell."

"1440. Magrath, Mathew, son of Marcus, coarb of Termon-Daveog, died; and John Boy was elected in his place."

"1469. John Boy, the son of John More Magrath, coarb of Termon-Daveog, died; and Dermott, son of Marcus, son of Maurice Magrath, was made coarb in his place."

"1496. Con O'Donnell, with the forces of Tyrconnell, Inishowen, and Dartry-MacClancy, turned in pursuit of Hugh and Maguire, and followed them to Termon-Daveog. Magrath, *i.e.* Rory, the son of Dermot, son of Marcus, coarb of that Termon, came to them and warned Con and the Kinel-Connell not to violate his protection, or the protection of the Termon, by attacking Maguire."

"1562. Magrath of Termon-Daveog, died."

According to the Rev. John O'Hanlon, in his *Life of St. Malachy*, the "Coarb was the vicar, a legal representative of the patron saint, or founder of the Church; but the word *Comorbha* is not exclusively ecclesiastical, for in the ancient laws of Erin it meant the heir or conservator of the inheritance; and it is in the latter sense it is always used in our ecclesiastical writings. There was an understood original compact, recognised by the Brehon laws, which vested the coarbship of the Church and its lands in two families, namely, in that of the patron saint or founder, and in that of the person who gave the original site or endowment." From this it is clear that the Magraths, so long coarbs of this termon, were quite distinct from the abbot and community of Lough Derg; and that it was not necessary, in virtue of their office, that they should be ecclesiastics.

A monument, likely to attract considerable attention and described for the first time in these pages, is an upright monolith, locally known as "The Standing Stone," but really the pedestal of one of the termon-crosses of Termon-Dabheoc. It stood until about fifteen years ago in the centre of a green and flat circle of raised earth on the summit of a hill named Drumawark (*i.e.* the hill or ridge of the view), about a mile north-east of Templecarne churchyard and somewhat more than the same distance from the nearest point of Lough Derg, which lies to the west of it. Having heard of this monument, and not finding an opportunity at the time of visiting it personally, I requested Rev. William Downey, then C.C. of Pettigo, to make a careful examination of it, and to furnish me with the result of his investigation. Father Downey, with characteristic kindness, complied with my request, and on 29th of October, 1879, visited Drumawark hill and took exact measurements of the pedestal as well as of the broken shaft of the termon-cross. On the following day he wrote me the result of his search. I

may here observe that this termon-cross consisted of three parts, the pedestal, the shaft, and the wheel or Celtic cross. The pedestal, termed by the people of the locality "The Standing Stone," escaped uninjured until the period in question. Now, as this pedestal or "Standing Stone" has been broken up into fragments, and is thus beyond the possibility of recognition or restoration, it is fortunate that we possess such an accurate description of it, which I shall give in Father Downey's own words:—"The stone, about which you wrote, is in the townland of Drumawark. It is a freestone, dressed pretty fairly, but has no inscriptions or characters upon it. It has four sides, is $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet in depth, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in width, and stands in its original state. It was a pedestal for another stone" (*i.e.* the shaft of the cross), "which was removed from it either through bigotry, or mischief-making, some twenty years ago, and broken into almost equal halves, one of which lies about a hundred yards east of the pedestal, the other about the same distance to the west of it. The shaft appears to be of a harder kind and more finely dressed than the pedestal. It is four-sided and stood fully four feet above the pedestal." On the 15th of August in the following year of 1880, just as the Station had closed, I set out from Lough Derg, in company with two esteemed friends,* to examine for myself this interesting object of which Father Downey had given me the first reliable information, and also of testing the truth of the report as to the destruction of "The Standing Stone." The afternoon was calm and sultry, not a ripple on the lake, not a breath of air to sway the branches of the fir plantation as we passed along through Ballymacavanny to the open country. Passing the cross-roads, where a bridge had been lately erected spanning the Owenea Water, a tributary of the Termon River, we turned off to the left and proceeded through fields in the direction of Drumawark. We had not proceeded far when a thunderstorm burst upon the overhanging mountain of Croagh-Kinnagoe,

* The late Messrs. John M'Menamin, architect, Lifford, and Thomas O'Callaghan of Dublin, brother-in-law to Archbishop Lynch of Toronto.

accompanied by a downpour of hailstones, which battered down the ripening crops in its destructive course. Soon the storm * swept past, and presently we hear the roar of countless torrents leaping in wild career down the almost precipitous slopes of the mountain. Having taken refuge at a vantage spot, we were soon enabled to continue our journey over the partially submerged fields; and at length *per varios casus* we reached the anxiously sought hill of Drumawark. Lying in a ditch near the earthen fort that crowns the hill of Drumawark we noticed a portion of the termon-cross. It is finely chamfered at each angle of the front side, but otherwise presents no ornamental work; having, besides, a tenon of about one foot in depth, which must have fitted into the socket of the pedestal. Though only about one-half of the original shaft, its weight cannot be less than three cwt. Clambering up the hillside, overgrown with furze and heath, we observe on its summit a low earth-work of circular formation and not very spacious. It wants the fosse usually to be seen in forts throughout the country, and from the ring outwards there is a steep declivity. Within its enclosure the soil appears rich and loamy, and in its centre at the period of Father Downey's visit, ten months previously, stood "The Standing Stone," the position it occupied being now marked by an open pit in which lay the broken fragments of that monument. The motive for this dastardly vandal act is thus explained by the concurrent testimony of several persons residing in the locality.

On the occasion of Father Downey's visit to the monolith, a rumour originated that it was in contemplation to collect together the parts of the termon-cross and have them re-erected on Station Island. To prevent such a step certain iconoclasts of the district came at dead of night provided with spades, bars, sledge-hammer and lantern, dug a deep trench round the stone, broke it into fragments, and buried them in

* This storm it was which caused the tragedy at Gweedore—where several lives were lost by the flooding of Derrybeg chapel. It broke over Gweedore about three hours earlier in the day.

the pit, as they had hoped, beyond all possibility of recognition. They then took their departure, leaving behind vivid traces * of their savage work.

At the eastern side of the enclosure, about forty paces down its slope, lies the other half of the shaft. Many years ago, we were told, persons were wont to assemble on the summit of the fort, and on one occasion they rolled through wanton amusement the broken shaft over the circular enclosure, the momentum it thus received carrying it a good way down the declivity. It exhibits the very same dressing and grooving at the angles of the face surface as the part lying at the roadside, already noticed. The top of the cross, looking as the peasants say "like the wheel of a barrow," for many years past has marked a family grave in Templecarne churchyard. To this we have already directed notice in our chapter on Templecarne. The stone composing this termon-cross was taken, we were told, from a freestone quarry in the ridge of a hill running parallel with this *druim*, and about half a mile south of it. It is of red sandstone of the same sort as that found in most of the inscribed stones, crosses, etc., at Lough Derg.

As to the view from Drumawark, nothing can be finer. From its hill the first glimpse of Lough Derg was obtained by the travel-stained pilgrim. A view of Lough Erne, extending from Enniskillen to Belleek, can be had from it. The monastic buildings of Devenish are clearly in sight, and, of old, signals by beacon lights could be easily kept up from it with Lough Derg. Magrath's Castle, near Pettigo, the residence of the hereditary

* On the night of this vandal outrage, certain persons, half a mile to the south of Drumawark, observed a light at "The Standing Stone," and the strokes of the sledge-hammer were distinctly heard by several. Those in the locality entirely exonerate from all complicity in the act the tenant of the farm on which the monument stood, but suspicion founded on circumstantial grounds points to the perpetrators of the dastardly deed.

guardian of the termon, is also distinguishable from this standpoint. Many years ago, it is related, a deep pit was dug in the eastern rim of this fort by some dreamers after gold. They failed to find gold; but about three or four feet from the surface a regular floor or pavement of burnt stones was discovered. On this pavement the signal fires were probably lighted, as well as the fires where the pilgrims cooked their frugal meals. It is no far-fetched supposition to affirm that this was the *Terminus*, or Termon, referred to in the account of the pilgrimage of Raymond, Count of Perilleux, regarding whom it is said that he called upon O'Neill on his way to the Purgatory, and that O'Neill directed him to a place called Protection, or Asylum. O'Sullivan, in a note to this account, calls it *Terminum*. On the arrival of the pilgrim knight at the Termon it is said:—"The Lord of the place and his brother treated Raymond very courteously, and ferried him over to the island with his retinue and a great number of pilgrims from other places." The cross which stood in the centre of this *circulus* was the termon-cross of Termon-Daveog. It pointed out the way to Lough Derg; told the pilgrim that he was drawing near to the term of his journey; and warned the outlaw, that he was within the sacred boundary, where he might lay claim to the right of sanctuary.

The ruthless and wanton destruction of this fine old cross affords proof that the fell spirit of iconoclasm, which vented its fury on the holy places of Lough Derg, is not yet quite dead. And as to the cross itself, mutilated and shattered though it be, who knows but it may yet rear its stately figure in reproduced form, if not on the hill of Drumawark, at least on Station Island?

About a quarter of a mile to the north-east of the hill of Drumawark is the Holy Well of Cullion, to which

pilgrims, after completing their Station at Lough Derg, were wont to pay a visit, each one bringing with him from the shore of the lake a rounded pebble, which he left at the well as a votive gift. In the lapse of time a mound of those stones accumulated near the well, till the occupant of the land, some forty or fifty years ago, with notions of the fitness of things more "canny" than archaic, utilised the stones* for drainage purposes.

He also endeavoured to drain the well, but to no avail, for, the spring continues still to bubble up "thick as a man's arm:" so my informant expressed it. Its water is said to be the only water in the neighbourhood having the same taste as that of Lough Derg, and this may be owing to the circumstance that it springs from a lead of iron ore. It has not been ascertained to what saint the well is dedicated. If, however, Cullion be a corruption of Cillene, then we may hold that it was dedicated to St. Cillene, who, as abbot of Lough Derg, died in 721. The stream from this fountain has hollowed out a ravine, or glen, in which, about forty perches south from the well, Mass used to be celebrated in the penal days. There are people still living in the neighbourhood, whose parents attended Mass there in the beginning of the present century.

Whether St. Molaisre of Devenish lived for any period at Lough Derg, we have no means of finding out. At any rate he must have paid frequent visits there; and, in the supposition that he followed the rule of St. Dabheoc, and that both houses were kindred communities, he may have actually dwelt for some time at Lough Derg for the twofold purpose of following the course of penance there practised by St. Patrick, and after him by St. Dabheoc, and of making himself conversant with the rule of life

* Many of those round pebbles can still be seen scattered about the well.

there established. St. Molaisre is still the titular saint of one of the seven * cells, or little oratories on Station

* In the November number of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 1891, appears an article from the pen of the able ecclesiologist, Very Rev. J. Fahey, P.P., V.G., Gort, in which he conjectures that the saints' "beds" on Station Island "are the ruins of some of the circular stone-roofed cells, in which our early saints were wont to pray and to perform their heroic penances." Of such cells, or *duirteacha*, several examples still exist on Innismurray, Arran, and elsewhere.

Mr. Wakeman, also, after having carefully examined those seven cells on Station Island, gave it as his decided opinion that they were originally beehive-shaped oratories; that oratories of that class were a distinctive feature of the ecclesiastical structures of the ninth century; that many remains of such oratories are to be found round the west coast of Ireland, more especially in Arran; and that all reputable archæologists are unanimous in assigning the ninth century, if not an earlier period, for their construction. He added that some specimens are to be found on the Continent, particularly in Norway, showing they are not peculiar to Ireland. "If this be so," writes the Venerable Prior, Canon James M'Kenna, "would this not be a strong argument to prove that the pilgrimage and its famous cave were always where they are now on Station Island. I confess this has always been my opinion. Having examined Saints' Island through and through on many occasions, and for many years, I failed to find any reason to convince me that the pilgrimage was ever on that island. I can find there no traces of the famous cave, nor the penitential beds, whereas they are distinctly found on Station Island. My theory is, that those two islands were looked upon, and written about, as a *quid unum et idem*, a sort of 'corporation sole;' that the pilgrimage and cave were founded by St. Patrick, or his disciple, St. Dabheoc, on Station Island; that the number of clerics detailed for service on Station Island corresponded with the number of cells there at present; that those cells, as we see them, denoted a perfectly-ordered community, the largest for the use of the superior, and the smaller for that of the subordinates; that in the devolution of time, the number in community increasing, it was thought desirable to acquire more space; that Saints' Island was marked out for that purpose, that a convent was built there for the larger community; and that finally the cells on Station Island were rendered unnecessary as habitations; and the spiritual wants of the pilgrimage were henceforth attended to by clerics deputed from the convent. I have examined the history and traditions of the place with

Island. Two of those cells, or "beds" are so closely connected as to give the appearance of forming but one "bed." They are known to the pilgrims as the "Large Bed," and they are dedicated to SS. Dabheoc and Molaisre, very forcibly suggesting the fraternity and close relationship which existed between these two saints and their respective foundations.

Built into the southern gable of St. Patrick's church may be seen four inscribed stones, which had long been lying about on Station Island, until the Revs. James and John M'Kenna, in the summer of 1860, caused them to be carefully enshrined in their present position. Three of these inscribed stones belong to the last century; one of them being the date-stone of a little church erected here by Friar Anthony O'Doherty, of the order of St. Francis; the other two having been placed in the centre of the oratories or "beds" of the titular saints of the place. To the fourth inscribed stone, as also to a corbel-shaped holy-water font still preserved on the island I shall refer at some length hereafter.

Now, one of the stones referred to goes to show the veneration in which St. Molaisre was held at Lough Derg. The inscription is as follows:—

"I. H. S.
St. Patrick and St. Blosses,*
Pray for us.
P. F. M'Grath."

It is difficult to say, with any degree of certainty, who

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care, and I must say I can find nothing in either with which this theory cannot be reconciled."

* Blosses is a corrupt form of Molaisre, as any one conversant with Celtic idioms will understand.

was the immediate successor of St. Dabheoc at Lough Derg. Indeed the records regarding this place for five centuries after St. Dabheoc are exceedingly meagre; an entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters* and a few notices in our Martyrologies being almost all we have to aid us (if we except some ancient inscriptions and other objects of archæological interest, no doubt of high historical importance), in unravelling the mystery which surrounds Lough Derg as regards the early centuries of Christian Ireland.

That our early writers have not made frequent and detailed reference to St. Patrick's Purgatory is not to be wondered at. It was regarded chiefly as a place of private devotion and penance; and since those pious practices were only in keeping with the general spirit and discipline of the early Irish Church, there appeared nothing about it uncommon or extraordinary, nothing calculated to attract the notice of our annalists and historians, except in the most passing way.

In the *Four Masters*, under the year 721, we find reference to another abbot of Lough Derg in the following concise entry:—

"A.D. 721. Cillene of Lough Derg, died."

Now, in the *Martyrology of Tallagh*, we find no less than thirteen saints of that name mentioned, some having their names merely recorded, others with their dignity, rank, and place of residence annexed; one of the latter, by the way, being no less a dignitary than "Bishop of Tehallen." I consider it extremely probable that the St. Cillene of Lough Derg is the same as St. Cillene recorded in the *Martyrology of Tallagh* under January 8th, as "Cillene, abbot."

Another of the inscribed stones in the gable of St.

Patrick's Church, commonly called "Prison Chapel," has the following inscription :—

"I. H. S.
St. Avil, pray for us.
P. F. M'Grath.
Hic fieri fecit.
1753."

I think we may fairly conjecture that St. Avil was abbot on Lough Derg, and one of St. Dabheoc's successors. In the *Martyrology of Tallagh,* under the 22nd of April, we meet with the following entry:—"Abel MacAedha, *potius* Adam." Now, it seems not improbable that this Abel MacHugh and St. Avil were one and the same individual. Besides Aedh, or Hugh, is the same name as Dabheoc, when divested of its adjuncts *do* and *oc;* so that in this way the entry in the Martyrology may be taken to mean—Abel M'Hugh, *i.e.* Avil the spiritual child, the dear disciple and successor of Hugh, *alias* Dabheoc.*

St. Avil is still held in veneration at Lough Derg; and to him was dedicated one of the penitential circles, or beds, on Station Island, according to the authority of a little handbook, which for more than a century has served as a guide to the devotional exercises of that pilgrimage.

A St. Fintan would appear to have been numbered among the patrons of Lough Derg. One of its islands (which of them we have no means of finding out,) had

* Father Shearman, in a letter of February 10th, 1879, does not consider this conjecture to be well-founded. He says, "Abel MacAedha is, I believe, the name of some abbot, with the patronymic, which has no connection with Dabheon -de-Beoan = oc, unless you compose the name in the same way as that of the patron of Ardcairne, near Boyle, Beoanus, *i.e.* Beo-Aedh = *Aidus vivax.* But that is a too much-strained derivation like many more of the kind."

been dedicated to him, and was known as St. Fintan's Island. Whether this saint was the same as St. Fintan of Clonenagh, we cannot determine. By looking into Festilogies of Irish saints, we find that St. Fintan is a very common name, there being no less than seventeen saints of that name recorded in the *Martyrology of Tallagh*. We know that St. Fintan of Clonenagh passed his novitiate under St. Columba, son of Crimthan, who had a school at Tyrdaglass, near Lough Derg on the Shannon. It may have been, indeed, that the similarity in the names of these lakes gave rise to a mistake. At St. Fintan's Monastery of Clonenagh were "seven churches," which were first brought under notice by the Rev. John O'Hanlon. At Lough Derg in Donegal were also "seven churches," and they are represented at the present day by seven oratories, or penal beds, dedicated to seven of the tutelary saints of the pilgrimage. This mysterious group of seven churches would appear to have belonged to the most notable of the religious foundations in Ireland, and would seem to have been a favourite institution in our country. Thus we read of the seven churches of Clonmacnoise, of Tory Island, of Glendalough, not to speak of many others. In other countries, too, the same feature is recorded; as, for instance, the seven churches, which clustered together at Bologna, under the name of San Stefano. But whether they had each a separate ecclesiastical government is another question.

The late Rev. Dr. Kelly, of Maynooth, the learned annotator of *Cambrensis Eversus*, tells us in his notes to that work :—

"As to the stations around the penal beds" (at Lough Derg), "where little churches formerly stood, the reader will find much interesting information regarding analogous institutions in the Bollandists, namely, stations established by St. Gregory

in the basilicas and cemeteries of Rome, which were frequented in Lent, Rogation days, and the four great festivals of our Lord."

I cannot say at what period the number of cells or oratories at Lough Derg was increased to seven. It may be that they were not established until after the Canons Regular of St. Augustine took possession of the place in the twelfth century; and perhaps not, indeed, until the fifteenth or sixteenth century. In the *Martyrology of Donegal* (edited by Drs. Todd and Reeves), we find the following statement touching this question, under the heading *Purgatorium Sti. Patricii*:—

"There are *five* beds of hard penance there, round which the pilgrims go, the Bed of Patrick, of Columcille, of Brigid, of Adamnan, and of Daveog. This is the testimony of Ferghal. But the bc. mi * says that he saw *two* beds there, viz., Patrick's and Colum's—48 (hours) without food, without drink—nine days there altogether. A pilgrimage during the day and prayers. The baking of bread must be without salt. Loch-Gerc is its name."

That special devotion was always paid to St. Brigid at Lough Derg no one can doubt. Her cross, her bed of penance, and her chair are lasting mementoes of the fact. At the eastern corner of St. Patrick's Church, on Station Island, on a large freestone block inserted in the wall, a cross of Roman model is deeply inscribed. This is known as "St. Brigid's Cross." At what date this cross was made it is impossible to say; but from its style, and close resemblance to similar inscribed crosses at Clonmacnoise, we may infer that it is a work of the twelfth century, if

* Some writer whose name I have not been able to find out. Perhaps it may refer to Brother Michael O'Clery, the celebrated Franciscan Annalist.

not of an earlier period. At this cross the pilgrims go through a very solemn and impressive ceremony. After repeating certain prayers on bended knees before it, they arise, and with outstretched arms in front of it, and with face towards the lake, they thrice repeat, "I renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh."

One of the seven oratories, or beds on the island is also dedicated to the Veiled Nun of Kildare, and is called "St. Brigid's Bed."

At the southern shore of the lake, just at the water's edge, a massive block of stone will attract the notice of the visitor. This stone shows beyond question the outline and appearance of a high-backed chair. The surface of the seat, and also of the back of the "Chair," is smooth; the seat is slightly concave and reclining backwards. The best view of the "Chair" presents itself as you

approach by water within a few oars' distance of it. The natives call it "St. Brigid's Chair"* to this day.

Here can be had a good view of Station Island and of Saints' Island as well, together with the expansive sheet of water of Lower Lough Derg; whilst a more solitary spot, or one more suggestive of soothing thoughts and devout meditation could hardly be found.

In that full and circumstantial account of her life written by Canon O'Hanlon, in the second volume of his *Lives of the Irish Saints*, we find that St. Brigid visited many of the holy places throughout Ireland. Though we have no authoritative evidence, beyond the existence of the Chair itself, as to her visit to this locality, it is permissible to believe that, attracted by the austere life practised here by St. Dabheoc, she may have paid a visit to his retreat; and, after the fatigue of her journey, may have rested her weary limbs on this very seat, and from it taken a survey of the island hermitage. As St. Brigid died about the year 520, the visit, of which we speak, must have occurred during the time the Cambrian St. Dabheoc presided over the religious foundation at Lough Derg. The place selected by the holy virgin to view the penitential retreat was singularly favourable. The death-like solitude and stillness on all sides, interrupted only by the occasional whir of the moor-fowl through the heath on the adjoining mountain, the fitful gust of the breezes over the lake, or the beating of the waves against the "Chair," and the rocky shore in its vicinity, are calculated to impress upon the mind deep and abiding recollections of the "Lake of Penance."

* The following are the measurements of the "Chair"—height of "Chair" to seat, 2 feet 4 inches; height of reclining back of the Chair, 2 feet; breadth of seat, 4 feet 4 inches; depth of chair, 4 feet; depth of seat, 1 foot 8 inches.

A little to the east of the "Chair," and bordering on the shore of the lake, may be seen a spa-well, largely impregnated with iron. The well is marked on the Ordnance map of the place, and such iron springs abound especially on this shore of the lake.

To the south of St. Brigid's Chair, and about two furlongs from the lake, is situated on the top of the mountain a carn-shaped eminence, on the very summit of which is located St. Dabheoc's Seat, which has been already described in these pages.

The late Rev. Jas. M'Loughlin, P.P., Killeter, in a series of articles on Lough Derg, published in the *Derry Journal* of 1878, writes thus:—

"A remarkable fact in connection with Lough Derg is the absence of roads leading to it. On all sides glens, mountains, deep ravines, quagmires and marshes surround the place. These obstacles are not only in close proximity to the lake, but extend for miles on all sides. Now, we know from history that Lough Derg was one of the most celebrated pilgrimages in the world. In 1397 a Knight of Rhodes, with a retinue of twenty men and thirty horses, came there. How did the gallant Knight and his retinue journey?"

Fortunately for us, however, we have ample evidence to satisfy us that a substantial roadway led to this secluded retreat even during that remote period, when, as we know, the fame of the Purgatory attracted pilgrims from the most distant lands. Remains of this ancient causeway, called by O'Donovan *a via strata*, can still be distinctly discerned, and are marked upon the maps of the Ordnance Survey. At the present day the entire course of this road cannot be traced, owing to the fact that it has been disused for two or three hundred years, during which period heath and peat have accumulated over it where it led through the mountains; and, where it wound its way

along the western shore of the lake, the waves, even more effectively, have destroyed almost every vestige of it.* Traces of this roadway can be clearly observed on the summit of Portneillinmore hill (which rises close to Saints' Island), also in a few places along the shore of the lake, particularly at Portcreevy bay, where it quitted the shore and led on through a mountain valley towards Templecarne and Pettigo. From the main route a branch line led off to where the present wooden bridge spans the Owenea river, and on by Tamlaght to the Termon Cross on Drumawark hill. At certain parts of this roadway, I have been informed, on the cutting away of the overlying surface of peat, large stepping stones, arranged in regular order, have been brought to light, thus confirming the name by which O'Donovan terms it, viz., a *via strata*.

At the southern side of Saints' Island, a narrow neck of water separates the island from the mainland; and here, during the time the monastery stood on Saints' Island, a bridge formed of oaken beams, and resting on stone piers, connected the island with the mainland. Of this bridge Dr. O'Donovan writes in his *Donegal Letters*:—

"The neck of Seeavoc was anciently connected with Saints' Island by a wooden bridge, supported by stone pillars, a part of which may yet be seen when the water is clear. The bridge served the purpose of the present money-making" (money-making indeed, for the landlord and the boatman appointed by him,) "ferryboat, and was crossed *gratis*."

An embankment of stones extended out into the water at either side, while a bridge of beams spanned the deep stream that flows in the centre of the channel, which here connects the upper with the lower lake. Remains of

* Upon Ordnance 6-in. map this ancient road is marked along the south-western shore of lake.

those piers and of the cochaɹ, or causeway leading from them, are still to be seen; but of the bridge of beams there is not a vestige left.

After the destruction of the establishment on Saints' Island in the seventeenth century, Portcreevy (*i.e.* the bushy harbour, a name it still merits from the number of trees and bushes growing there), continued still for a time as the place of embarkation to Station Island, or the Island of the Purgatory. A more direct route was subsequently discovered, which led from Templecarne churchyard, by the old roadway, still in existence, towards the Owenea river, and thence straight across Ballymacavanny hill to the spot where stands the present ferryhouse. By this route came Cæsar Otway, Carleton and several others, who, finding that sterner methods had failed to suppress the pilgrimage, adopted the unworthy *role* of ridicule and misrepresentation. This comparatively ancient road stretched from Lough Derg to the fertile and wooded banks of Lough Erne; which, owing to its great extent of water, continued for many ages to be the principal thoroughfare for a large number of the pilgrims. Over its expanse of surpassing beauty sailed the pilgrims, and in the hospices or guest-houses of the monasteries at Devenish. Lisgoole and Clones, they received food and shelter when going and returning. While to strangers were there given suitable directions as to the details of the journey.

"With footsteps strong, and bosom brave,
Looking for that mysterious Cave,
Where the pitying heavens will show
How my salvation I may gain,
By bearing in this life the purgatorial pain." *

* From Denis Florence MacCarthy's translation of Calderon's *Purgatorio de San Patricio.*

CHAPTER VII.

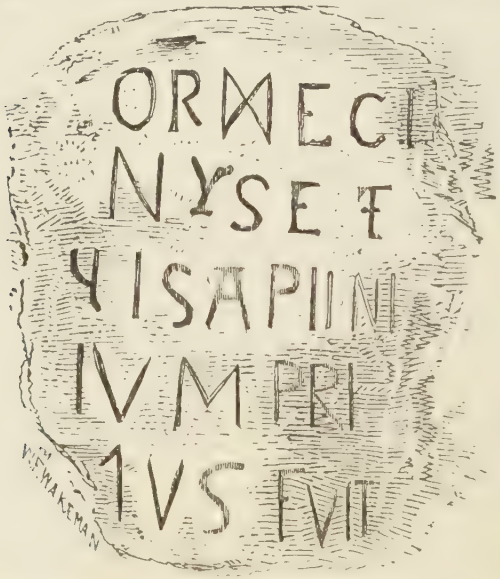
ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS AT LOUGH DERG—LEARNED DISQUISITION OF THE RIGHT REV. DR. GRAVES—THE ABBOT PATRICK—LEGEND REGARDING THE ABSENCE OF SALMON FROM ITS WATERS.

ON Station Island are two inscribed stones, which hitherto have been regarded as perfectly undecipherable, and have up to this completely baffled the ingenuity of antiquarian visitors to the place. The more important by far of the inscribed stones is that set into the southern gable of St. Patrick's Church. It is a small sandstone, and must have been the *titulus* of one of the early churches belonging to the pilgrimage. It is much waterworn, and several of the characters on it are quite indistinct and illegible. The second inscribed stone is a corbel-shaped holy-water stoup, which lay about the island and escaped observation until lately. Though of more recent date than the first named, it is here noticed in the same connection, as both inscriptions refer to the same saint. Being struck by the archaic character of those inscribed stones, I requested Mr. Wakeman, then of Enniskillen, to accompany me to the island in order to have rubbings of the inscriptions taken.

This we effected on the 12th of April, 1878. Soon after Mr. Wakeman sent forward the rubbings to Dr. Graves, Protestant Bishop of Limerick, who is admittedly one of the foremost authorities at the present day on Ogham and ancient Irish inscriptions. The result of his

lordship's investigation is nothing short of a most important discovery. Dr. Graves' learned disquisition on these inscriptions having been very kindly communicated to me by Mr. Wakeman, I gladly take the liberty of placing it here on record. Dr. Graves writes:—

"Being induced by what you" (Mr. Wakeman) "told me to believe, that the stone on Station Island, of which you sent me a rubbing, originally contained the whole of the inscription, I



Stone built into Wall of Old Chapel, Station Island, Lough Derg.

applied myself to the consideration of it with much care. The result of my study has been to assure me that I have substantially made it out, though I may yet find that my reading requires correction in matters of detail. The enclosed copy shows you how I deal with it. The letters and strokes in *red* are what I supplied. I have taken those in *black* exactly as you represented them.

"Now let us consider the parts of the inscription in order:—I propose to supply an I at the end of the first line. Thus, MECI would be the Latinized form of MEIC, an old, but not the oldest form of the genitive, MAC.

"After the N which commences the second line, I introduce a Y, but with some doubt. In that place I should rather have expected IS.

"At the end of the same line, I conjecture the diphthong Æ. To this I was led mainly by the little stroke going up obliquely from the top of the vertical stroke, which your rubbing exhibits. The A in the third line has a square top of this kind.

"At the commencement of the third line, I suggest a Q, which I would read as QU—not an uncommon thing in inscriptions. After SAP, I restore IENT, being perfectly certain that the letters were there once, whether the traces of them remain or not.

"In the latter half of the fourth line, I restore PRI, admitting, however, that OPTI may possibly have stood there originally.

"The I at the beginning of your fifth line, I take to be the last member of an M; and at the end of the same line I place the word ERAT or FUIT.

"Now as to the meaning of the inscription, I confess that I entertain some doubt as to the signification of OR.* The inscription plainly being in the Latin language, we could not expect to find OR DO, or OR AR, because DO and AR are Irish prepositions, the Latin equivalent of which would be PRO. It may be that the OR here is an abbreviation for ORATE PRO;† but I cannot say that I have ever seen an instance of

* The same learned scholar, in a letter (to Mr. Wakeman), dated at Parknasilla, Kenmare, August 5th, 1878, says: "As to the OR, I now regard it as equivalent to OROIT *ar*, or *Orate pro*. The *sapiens* is the Latin for ꝼuı."

† The Most Rev. Dr. Moran, then Bishop of Ossory, now Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, in a letter to me from Kilkenny, dated 24th of March, 1879, thus concurs with Dr. Graves' reading of the in-

such an abbreviation. It seems to me not improbable that OR is an abbreviation for ORATORIUM, or ORACULUM. Both these words are in use to signify a church or chapel. The former occurs repeatedly with that meaning in Adamnan's Life of St. Columbkille. As to the name which follows, it seems to me that it can be nothing else than MACNISSE.

"This was the name of a very famous man, a contemporary of St. Patrick and Bishop of Connor; and it is a matronymic, for he was called after his mother, CNESS. That would account for the termination *Æ* in the Latinized form of the name. You will find the whole history of this eminent saint and bishop in Dr. Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore* (pp. 237-9); and take note especially of the fact that he was a great traveller—in fact a pilgrim—in consequence of the sin which he had committed. Having visited both Rome and Jerusalem, he might thus have acquired the reputation of being eminently *sapiens*. He died in the year 514. I do not suppose that the inscription is so old as that, but I regard it as being very ancient. As you say in your letter, it must be very ancient, or comparatively modern. If it was of the eighth, ninth, tenth, or eleventh century, we should almost certainly have the rounded forms of the letters E, M, N, T, U; and the O, instead of being large, would be rather smaller than the other capitals. The M" (the extremities of the vertical lines of this letter are connected by two lines drawn transversely) "seems to be an ornamental initial.

"This MACNISSE had another name. He was called CAEMAN BREAC, the Latinized form of which is CAEVA-

scription: "In the inscription at page 64, the last letter in the second line is the old Irish Q, and there can be no doubt that the whole inscription thus runs—'*Or* Mecinyse qui Sapientium primus fuit,' *i.e.* A prayer for MacNisse who was the head of the Wise Men of Erin. Such phrases are often used in our Annals relative to our great saints. The *OR* was used in the early Irish Church like the *R. I. P.* in modern inscriptions. It was the conventional formula which asked a prayer for the faithful departed. There are other instances of its being used in Latin inscriptions."

NUS. Now if you look at the passage in the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick, to which Dr. Reeves refers, you will find a very sad and strange story about the man's *hand*.

"It is not impossible that the other inscription, of which you sent me a rubbing, is to be read MANUS COIVANI.

"This whole matter is so curious, that it deserves the most careful investigation. For my part, I should not like to publish the views which I have stated in this letter until I had seen carefully made paper-moulds of the two inscriptions, if only that they might enable me to pronounce a positive opinion as to the mode in which the inscriptions should be read, and the age of the writing."

Acting on Dr. Graves' suggestion, and at my request, Mr. Wakeman paid a second visit to Station Island on the 23rd of May, 1878, when he made fresh and very careful rubbings of the two inscriptions, as also two casts of them in paper. Those rubbings and paper-moulds brought out the surprising and important fact that all the letters in the inscription, supplied or suggested by Dr. Graves, are to be found on the stone. The last word in the inscription is *FUIT*.*

* "More light might yet be thrown upon the Lough Derg inscription. Is it not strange that in Ireland so few ancient inscriptions in the Latin language have been preserved? Here in Algeria, though the country has been repeatedly desolated by wars and persecutions, we can still point to a considerable number of very interesting ones."—Extract from a letter sent me by Dr. Graves from Algiers, 25th February, 1879.

Mr. Wakeman, in a letter dated August 26th, 1887, makes the following apposite observations on this valuable inscribed stone: "When last I saw the OR MECI stone on Station Island, I was much pained to perceive that in dashing the wall of the Church, in which it is set, the workmen in a great measure covered the very faint lettering with their wash. To remove this substance would require a very delicate operation, and I fear, that do what one might, some portions of the surface of the stone would suffer. My attempts to take paper rubbings failed almost entirely, but fortunately I retain the best of the rubbings which I made while yet the stone had not been interfered with. I do not

Now, as to the person referred to in this inscription, some difference of opinion may arise from the fact that two saints of that name are met with in our early church records. One of them is thus mentioned in the *Four Masters*:—"A.D. 589. St. MacNise, Abbot of Cluain-Mic-Nois for a period of sixteen years, died on the tenth of the month of June." In the Annals of Clonmacnoise it is thus given:—"A.D. 587. MacNissi, an Ulsterman, third Abbot of Clonvicnose, died in the sixteenth year of his place." To say that he may have gone on pilgrimage to Lough Derg and died there, and that in course of time a church with the above inscription was erected there to his memory, would be the merest conjecture.

It is more likely that the MacNisse referred to in the inscription was St. MacNisse, first Bishop of Connor, and Abbot there likewise.

The Bollandists in their *Acta Sanctorum* at the 3rd of September give a detailed account of St. Aengus MacNisse. He was baptised by St. Patrick:—"*Quem venerabilis sanctus Patritius, Hibernorum Apostolus, baptizavit.*" Of his education by St. Olcan, or Bolcan, to whose possessions he succeeded, it is added:—"*Bolcano vero episcopo alendum atque docendum dedit.*" Of his intimacy with St. Patrick the Tripartite Life thus assures us:—"And MacNisse of Condere read his psalms with Patrick." His pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem, and

think that any rubbing which may be made in future, will show the lettering as well as mine does; and I therefore look upon the latter as highly interesting and valuable as an authority. It is sent herewith for your inspection. You will, I think, be able to trace in it every letter as I have given the inscription in the woodcut in your book. Pray compare rubbing and woodcut."

[Seeing that the woodcut was a perfect facsimile of the paper-mould referred to, I left the latter aside, and it is now quite undecipherable. —ED.]

to the other holy places of Palestine are thus related by the Bollandists:—

"*Perfectus autem vir factus, atque beato Patricio in episcopum suæ gentis ordinatus, limina Apostolorum adiit, Jerusalem quoque, aliaque sancta terrae repromissae loca visitavit.*" On his return home after those distant pilgrimages, he founded the church and monastery of Connor:—"*Connorense monasterium construitur, in quo usque hodie sedes episcopalis habetur.*"

He predicted the birth of St. Comgall, founder of the monastery of Bangor. The veneration of St. Brigid towards him is sufficiently conveyed in these words:—

"*Haec de sancta Brigita dixit, quae pro utilibus causis eum visitavit.*"

That St. Colman, first Bishop of Dromore, profited largely by his counsel and training, we learn from the following passage taken from his life by the Bollandists, at the 7th of June:—"*Deinde saepe venerabilem Macnyseum Conderensem episcopum petiit, qui hospitum praesciens adventum, eis necessaria jussit praeparari. Ille itaque illuc perveniens, in omni hilaritate susceptus est; ibique paucis diebus mansit. Deinde, inito concilio, venerabilem senem ubi locum serviendi Deo fundare deberet, consulit. Qui respondit: voluntas Dei est ut in finibus Campi Coba tibi construas monasterium.*"

St. MacNisse died on the 3rd of September, 514. He is commemorated in the "Feilire" of St. Aengus thus:—

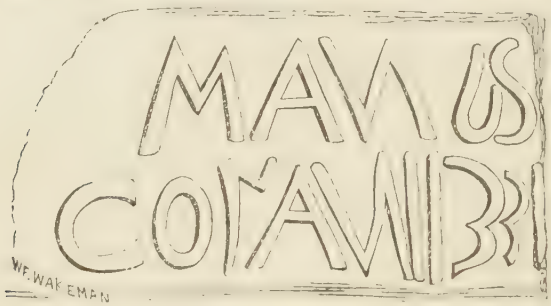
Mac Nisse co milid
O Conderiu mairid;

Which is thus expressed in English:—

"MacNisse with thousands
From the great Condere."

He is called in a gloss on the "Feilire," Caeman brecc Mac Nisi.

The inference which I would be inclined to draw from our inscription is that St. MacNisse, in expiation of his sins, went on a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory on Lough Derg, and that the inscribed stone already referred to was erected in the oratory in which he performed his penitential works; or, that a memorial church, of which this was the *titulus*, was soon after erected there. The admitted antiquity of the inscription which belongs to the sixth, or at latest seventh century, confirms this view. The opinion is greatly strengthened by the second inscription, or legend, which appears on a corbel-shaped font now lying on Station Island. The legend runs:—



Inscription on Station Island, Lough Derg.

In the second line of this inscription a small v is inserted after the first I, which shows, as I believe, that the engraver had forgotten it till after the remainder of the inscription had been made out, and then inserted it in its present crushed-up shape. This second inscription Dr. O'Donovan saw on the occasion of his visit to Lough Derg; and, while he regarded it as comparatively modern, he could not understand it, his conjecture being that it referred to one of the Coarbs of Termon-Daveoc.

"Caeman Breac" was a cognomen bestowed on St. MacNisse, and had its origin in a melancholy story, which

may be found narrated at length in Colgan's "Trias Thaumaturga" (Septima Vita S. Patricii, Lib. II., Cap. 134, p. 147).*

If the reader will accept my conjectural views as to these two inscribed stones, the obvious inference would be that St. MacNisse, who was St. Patrick's contemporary, had been to Lough Derg on pilgrimage, in addition to the pilgrimages recorded of him to the Tombs of the Apostles, to Jerusalem, and the other sacred spots in the Holy Land. Hence it would clearly follow that the pilgrimage of Lough Derg dates from the time of St. Patrick, apostle of Ireland, to whom as to its founder tradition ascribes it.

In the ninth century, there was an ecclesiastic, named the Abbot Patrick, connected with Lough Derg. It appears he was superior for some time of the religious establishment there, and afterwards became abbot of the principal house of his order at Armagh. His feast is celebrated on the 24th of August, and his name is entered in the *Martyrology of Tallagh* as "Patritius hostiarius et Abbas Armacanus." He is said to have written a life of our national Apostle; and was considered by some, though erroneously as we have shown some reason to believe, to have been the founder † of the "Purgatory,"

* The Right Rev. Dr. Reeves, in his "Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor," refers to the story regarding the hand of MacNisse, and states, on the authority of the Septima Vita, that it was buried in a place called after it Carn-lamha, *i.e. tumulus Manûs*. May it not have been that the inscribed stone entitled *Manus Coimani* at Lough Derg was really the receptacle (as the hollow space in its centre, resembling a font or stoup for holy water, would suit the purpose,) of the hand thus miraculously severed at the instance of St. Patrick in punishment of the grievous lapse of MacNisse?

† The chronicles of John Brompton, a Cistercian abbot, Gerald Cambrensis and Henry Knighton, hazard the view that the Abbot Patrick, who lived four centuries after our national apostle, was the founder of the Purgatory. On the other hand, the Bollandist Fathers

or place of penance at Lough Derg. His death is said to have occurred in the year 850.

Regarding him, or St. Patrick *major* (it is not stated which), a singular tradition is preserved at Lough Derg, which obtains implicit credence among the artless inhabitants of that locality.

Now, as to the traditions embodied in this book, while I do not profess myself to be so incredulous in the matter of local traditions as Dr. O'Donovan does, yet I well know that the historical accuracy of many of them cannot be sustained. In relating them I do not undertake to establish their accuracy, but merely state them as I received them, leaving to the reader to attach to them whatever importance he may deem fit.

Considering that the Celtic people have been always an imaginative race, we need not wonder that some historical facts, especially certain events in the lives of the Irish saints, who were so affectionately venerated, became surrounded and embellished by poetic and imaginary glosses, until in the lapse of time the nucleus of fact became so entangled in the network of fiction as to be hardly distinguishable. Hence it comes that many of the popular traditions of our country are to be received with considerable caution and reservation; and although some of

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incline to the opinion that it was not the Abbot Patrick, but the great St. Patrick, who was the founder of the Purgatory. Of the same opinion is the Spanish writer, Sr. D. Fr. Benito G. Feijoo (2nd Edition, Madrid, 1769), who, replying to the query, "Why is it called the Cave or Purgatory of St. Patrick?" says:—"Most probably St. Patrick had spent some time in this cave doing penance; and this would supply a motive as to why so many afterwards, either thinking the place sanctified by a man so eminent in virtue, or desiring to imitate him, should enter the cave in order to mortify themselves. The love of the Irish towards their Apostle has extended and propagated this devotion during the succeeding ages."

these traditions may not be relied upon as conveying historical truth, they are valuable in a variety of ways, and are therefore worthy of preservation. Many of them contain a grain of historical truth, and when viewed in the light and with the aid of contemporaneous events, are found to be of much advantage to the historian; while even those that are purely imaginary and legendary may be also useful, inasmuch as they suggest and indicate the manners and customs, the simple and confiding faith, the social habits, modes of thought, etc., of our remote ancestors.

To return to my subject. The story is told that in ancient times Lough Derg abounded in salmon and salmon-trout, the same as its near neighbour Lough Erne. The lake gave an unfailing supply of salmon, as we are told, to the frugal table of the good monks; and little exertion was needed to secure a plentiful supply of this much-prized fish. On a certain occasion the monks were expecting St. Patrick on his visitation; and, in order to have salmon for the saint's repast, they stayed out fishing most of the day. Having failed in their efforts, they were sorely perplexed in consequence. All this they explained to the saint, who declared that henceforth salmon should no more inhabit the waters of Lough Derg. In proof of the foregoing incident, the legend goes on to say, that about sixty years ago, a gentleman of the sceptical school, having heard the story as already narrated, put himself to some trouble in order to falsify the saint's prediction. Having procured salmon from a distance, he carefully marked and deposited them in the lake; when lo! next morning, the salmon were found in a net which had been placed in the river Derg to prevent their escape.

Little over forty years ago, Dr. O'Donovan related the same story; and, if only to show how much those legends

are altered and exaggerated, even in a short period of time, I shall give his version of it. He says:—

"No salmon come into the lake, though they come up to the very throat of the river. Two fishermen (who had a weir near the source of the Derg) cast two live salmon into the lake not many years ago, to see if they'd remain there; and in order to know them they cut off a part of their fins and tails, but on their return they found the same salmon caught in their *cochal*, or net. This is attributed to the curse of St. Patrick."

As a matter of fact salmon cannot be found in Lough Derg. The lake, however, abounds in trout, and affords excellent fishing. In this respect, perhaps, scarcely any other lake in Ireland can compete with it. During the summer and autumn a day seldom passes without witnessing a number of arrivals of those on fishing bent, and such followers of Isaac Walton are generally rewarded with a numerous take. Trout weighing six or eight pounds are occasionally landed, but those most commonly caught do not exceed a pound in weight. When a gentle "fresh" is blowing, no more contemplative or enticing pastime can be desired than playing a well-trimmed "cast" off the shoals and reefs, which are so numerous throughout the lake. And well may we imagine how the monks of Lough Derg in the olden time, notwithstanding their prayerful and penitential lives, enjoyed to their heart's content this delightful recreation as they sailed over its sparkling waters in their skin-covered currachs.

Eels, also, are to be found in Lough Derg. Near the mouth of the river Derg remains of an eel-weir may be seen. Of late years pike has made its way into the lake, and some fish of this class have been caught weighing over thirty pounds. Those "fresh water sharks" have hitherto made sad havoc on the trout of the lake; but it

is satisfactory to find that large numbers of them each year during the spawning season are netted in the streams flowing into the lake, and in this way it is hoped their number will be greatly diminished. Through the surrounding mountains, foxes* have been making similar havoc among the hares and heathfowl. They find a natural covert in certain caves and crevices on the sides of Croagh-Kinnagoe. Their number, however, is being rapidly reduced, as each year beyond a score of them are trapped and destroyed.

On the northern shore of the lake, not far from where the lake finds its only outlet, may be seen a beautiful white strand. The natives call it the "Jack-stone shore." Here are to be met with smoothly-rounded pebbles, small shells also, and a velvet strand, such as may be seen on the sea-shore. It is beyond question that many of the lakes and rivers of Ireland contain pearls; of this the river Bann is a notable instance, where pearls have been found of great value. They are found in a species of mussel—the *unio atratus*—of an oval shape, about three or four inches long, by two broad.† That Lough Derg,

* What the foxes are to the heath game, otters are to the fishes of the lake. That otters are numerous in Lough Derg is unquestionable. A little beyond Blackwater Hill I chanced to see during one of my excursions a pair of otters basking in the sunshine on the shore, and, when apprised of our approach, they rushed precipitately into the lake.

† "It is generally in deep pools with loamy bottoms that the fish are found. In the shallow pools or still water they are taken by wading in and collecting them by the foot, and throwing them out upon the bank. In the deep water they are taken by thrusting a long stick between the valves when the shell is open. The white substance of the fish directs the eye to the mark. It is most generally in diseased shells that the best pearls are to be had. These are known by their wrinkled and branded appearance. When a large quantity has been fished up they are left in heaps to decompose, after which they are carefully washed, and the pearls collected from the residuum."—J. B. Doyle's *Tours in Ulster*, p. 134.

also, yields pearls has been lately ascertained. In the summer of 1874, a pearl-fisher came to the lake on pilgrimage. He was an Italian, and, like so many of his countrymen, possessed the gift of music in a high degree, with which he wakened up many sweet echoes in his journey through this mountain district. Having reached the lake he made a search for pearls along the shore, and at the river Barderg was successful in finding a few, which, however, being small and of an inferior quality were, as he said, worth but a few shillings each.

There's music in the lake and fountain,
There's melody in vale and mountain;
The hymn that's sung by rock and river
Is—Blessed be God's name for ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROBABLE DESTRUCTION OF ST. DABHEOC'S MONASTERY BY THE DANES—ITS COLONISATION BY AUGUSTINIAN CANONS —PILGRIMAGE OF THE KNIGHT OWEN.

"He next for Ireland shaped his course,
And saw the fabulous Hibernia, where
The goodly sainted elder made the Cave,
In which men cleansed of all offences are;
Such mercy there, it seems, is found to save."

—*Ariosto, "Orlando Furioso," translated by W. S. Rose.*

FROM the fifth until the close of the eighth century Ireland won for herself among the nations the honourable distinction of being called the *Insula Doctorum et Sanctorum*. It was her golden era. From the beginning of the ninth century, however, down to the battle of Clontarf in 1014, the bright scene had changed. During this period the Danes pillaged and laid desolate most of the religious houses throughout Ireland. That Lough Derg shared in the common fate is only too likely; for, we find in the *Four Masters*, under the year 836, that "the churches of Lough Erne were destroyed by the Galls" (the Danish invaders), "with Clones, Devenish, etc." During the long and cruel struggle with the Danes, who are called in our annals "foreigners," and also "black gentiles," pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Patrick's Purgatory, even supposing that the place could have escaped pillage, would have been a most perilous

undertaking. Hence we might expect that the sanctuary, if not utterly demolished by the Danes, had been well nigh abandoned during a considerable period, and had for the time lost much of its popularity and attractiveness.

Some time after the rout and expulsion of the Danes, religious of the Augustinian order were introduced into Ireland. They took possession of the ruined cloisters of Lough Derg, Devenish, Clones, and many others throughout the country. Imar, Archbishop of Armagh, is said to have been the first to introduce them into Ireland, about the year 1126, and to have put under their charge the abbey founded by him at Armagh, and placed under the invocation of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul. It is asserted that the monastery occupied by these venerable canons at Lough Derg was also dedicated to the same holy Apostles. Ware states that this house of the Augustinian Canons at Lough Derg, according to the Register of John Bole (sometime Archbishop of Armagh, and who died *anno* 1470), is called "the filial place of the monastery of the Apostles Peter and Paul of Armagh."

With the introduction of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine* the second epoch in the history of Lough Derg is reached, which as far excelled the glory of the first, as the third epoch, dating from the post-Reformation period, is destined, we hope, to transcend the glory of both. Under the pious Canons life was again infused into the withered bones, pilgrimage to Lough Derg received a fresh impetus, and the sanctuary soon shone forth in brighter lustre than previously. The Canons Regular continued in charge at Lough Derg for about five

* So widespread did the Augustinian order become throughout Ireland that at the time of the confiscation of monastic property in the sixteenth century no less than two hundred and thirty-one houses belonged to that order.

hundred years, from the twelfth to the seventeenth century.

It is matter for regret that Dr. Lanigan, in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland* (Vol. I., p. 368), should, in writing of this retreat, exhibit a want of discrimination and judgment little in keeping with his acknowledged character as an historian:—"It will not," he says, "be expected that I should waste my time with giving an account of the so-called Patrick's Purgatory of Lough Derg, or examining if there could be any foundation for attributing it to our Apostle. It is never mentioned in any of the Lives, nor was it, I believe, heard of until the eleventh century, the period at which the Canons Regular at first appeared. For, it was to persons of that order, as the story goes, that St. Patrick confided the care of that cavern of wonders." It is easy to understand how Dr. Lanigan was led into this mistake, when we reflect that he spent so many years of his life out of Ireland. With the historical writings and records relating to his country he was, indeed, profoundly conversant, but its archæology, topography and local traditions, such useful handmaids of history, were to him sealed fountains. If we are to admit only such facts as are recorded in the early Lives and Acts of St. Patrick, then we should on similar grounds reject as spurious many statements and traditions regarding the early Irish Saints, many of which are now accepted by historians as well-established facts. Strange to think, Dr. Lanigan seems to base his argument against the origin and antiquity of St. Patrick's Purgatory on the authority of a little tract, which Colgan says he found in a MS. placed after the end of the *Vita Tripartita*, and which he attributes to the author of the Tripartite Life. That it was not written by the author of the Tripartite appears certain from the mention in it of Canons Regular,

a class of persons then unknown. It appears to be a transcript of the Monk, Henry of Saltrey. In this little tract it is said :—

"*Statimque Beatus Patricius in eodem loco ecclesiam construxit, et Beati Patris Augustini Canonicos vitam apostolicam sectantes in ea constituit : fossam autem prædictam, quæ in cœmeterio est extra frontem ecclesiæ orientalem, muro circumdedit, et januas serasque apposuit, ne quis eam ausu temerario et sine licentia ingredi præsumeret, clavem vero custodiendam commendavit priori ecclesiæ ejusdem, et quoniam homo a peccatis purgetur, locus ille Purgatorium Sti. Patricii nominatur.*"

As most of the monasteries laid desolate during the Danish wars were repeopled by Canons Regular, the custom gradually obtained of calling their monastic predecessors Canons Regular, and in this way St. Patrick himself was called a Canon Regular, and his feast as such regularly observed in their order. Had Dr. Lanigan made allowance for this intelligible and, in the circumstances, pardonable fiction ; or, had he, like the Spanish critic Feijoo, only made a closer study of the subject, we would be spared the sweeping and uncalled for strictures already quoted. Had Dr. Lanigan been only aware of the ancient remains, inscriptions and traditions at the place, as well as the references in the ancient Irish writings pointing to St. Patrick, St. Dabheoc, and other holy abbots, who presided over this monastic and penitential retreat, he would have been spared the opprobrium of assailing the origin and antiquity of this venerable pilgrimage. Jocelyn, also, impugns the Patrician origin of Lough Derg, for the sole reason, as it would appear, that it detracts from the fame of his favourite pilgrimage of Croagh-Patrick, that of Lough Derg having been established, as he says, by the Augustinians in opposition

to it. But the reasons we have adduced against Dr. Lanigan's views will sufficiently meet Jocelyn's objections as well.

Touching the occupation of Lough Derg by the Augustinian order, the following lengthy extract from Dr. Lanigan's *Eccl. Hist.* (Vol. IV., p. 348), must prove interesting :—

"About the twelfth century the Irish monasteries very generally adopted the rule of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. Nor was the transition difficult: for the old Irish rules did not, in substance, differ much from that of the said canons, inasmuch as they were not as strictly monastical as those of the Egyptian, Basilian, or Benedictine monks, and allowed, without particular dispensation, the union of the active service of the Church, such as practised by the secular clergy, with the monastic regulations, which, although varying more or less, were, as I have often remarked, founded on the system which St. Patrick had seen followed at Lerins and at Tours, and which he introduced into Ireland. Now the characteristic feature of the Canons Regular, which distinguishes them from monks, emphatically so called, is, that although they make vows and are bound to observe certain laws similar to those of the monks, they are capable of practising the functions which usually belong to the secular clergy. Yet the system of the ancient Irish clergy was much more severe than the Canons Regular, as is clear from the rule of St. Columbanus, which was taken from those of the monasteries in Ireland, particularly that of Bangor, of which that great saint had been a member."

From the foregoing we can well understand how certain of the priors of this monastery, and doubtless others of the community as well, are recorded as holding parishes and other dignities in the diocese within which this establishment was situated.

Soon after the Canons Regular of St. Augustine came

to Lough Derg, there occurred an event which served to give this island retreat much of its Continental fame. It so happened that in the twelfth century, an Irish soldier, in various accounts called Owen, Oien, Owain, Eogan, Euennius, or Ennius,* who had served as a crusader under the standard of King Stephen, after quitting military service, felt remorse of conscience for the irregularities of an ill-spent life. In the account published by Monteluan the wickedness of his early life is fully detailed; but Henry of Saltrey, Mathew of Paris, and our own countryman Colgan dismiss this part of his career with a few words only. Hearing of St. Patrick's Purgatory, he determined on making a pilgrimage to it in order to find rest for his troubled soul.

The narrative of the Knight Owen should be received with the proverbial "grain of salt;" for, it was written at a time when the love of the marvellous held great sway over the minds of men. Highly sensational and chivalrous

* He is called Ludovicus Ennius by Monteluan, a Spanish writer, upon whose work Calderon founded one of his most charming dramas, *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*, which in turn has been rendered into English by the late Denis Florence M'Carthy. The earliest printed account we have of this Owen, or Ennius, is given in Wynkin de Worde's "Polychronicon," published at Westminster in 1495, thus:— "In this Steven's tyme a Knight that hyght Owen wente into the Purgatory of the second Patrick, abbot, and not byshoppe. He came agayne and dwelled in the abbaye of Ludene of Whyte Monks in Irlonde, and tolde of joye and of paynes that he had seen." The MS. account of Owen's pilgrimage had existed for three hundred years before the Polychronicon was printed. It was written by Henry, monk of Saltrey in Huntingdonshire, from the account he had received from Gilbert, a monk of the Cistercian abbey of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Louth. Colgan published this MS. nearly in full in his *Trias*, Louvain, 1647. Mathew of Paris, in his History of England under date 1153, the last year of the reign of King Stephen, agrees pretty much with Colgan in his account of the adventures of Owen in St. Patrick's Purgatory.

accounts of the Christian Knights, of their exploits in the Crusades, together with the passion for romance, kept alive by the Trouveres and Troubadours, pervade the literature of the period and obscure passing events under the colouring of fiction. Hence, we may regard the different accounts of the Knight's Vision, and of the poems founded thereon by Dante, Ariosto, and Calderon, as containing much that is largely imaginary and poetic. According to Mathew of Paris, Owen received permission from the King to pass into Ireland in order to see his parents. Whilst here, he finally made up his mind to undertake a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory; and with that intent fortified himself with the usual permission from the bishop of the diocese, and from the prior of the Island, both of whom in vain strove to dissuade him from his purpose. The Knight's pilgrimage occurred, according to Mathew of Paris, in 1153. He prepared himself by a fifteen days' fast and prayer before entering the cave. After this Mass was said, the pilgrim received a salutary instruction, Holy Communion was administered, and a procession of monks clothed in white was formed to conduct the pilgrim to the mouth of the cave. In one of the metrical versions of Owen's pilgrimage, it is thus related:—

> "Every priest and every man
> Went with hym yn processoun;
> And as lowde as they myghte crye,
> For hym they songe the letanye,
> And browte hym fayre ynto the entre,
> Ther as Syr Owayne wolde be."

The prior having secured the mouth of the cave, the knight soon found himself in a large cloistered hall, in which were fifteen religious, clothed in white garments.

One of them, preparing him for the attacks of the evil spirits he was to encounter, warned him to invoke the powerful name of Jesus to his aid. This advice is thus given in the same metrical version of Saltrey's narrative:—

"But if they will thee beat or bind,
Look thou have these words in mind:
'Jesus, as Thou art full of might,
Have mercy on me, sinful knight!'
And evermore have in thy thought
Jesus, that thee so dear has bought."

After the fifteen ecclesiastics had left, the Knight found himself surrounded by demons, who by various threats and blandishments tried to persuade him to return. Finding him immovable in his purpose, they conducted him from place to place where innumerable persons were enduring various torments, but at each new danger, by repeating the sacred name of Jesus, he escaped. Having thus passed intact through indescribable sufferings, he next approached the most perilous of all, namely, the transit of a bridge, which was high, narrow, and slippery as ice. This crossing was inevitable, unless he wished to return to the door of the cave from which he had set out. With slow and timid footsteps he proceeded to cross the bridge, his heart all the time centered in God, and the sweet name of Jesus on his lips. Beneath flowed a river of sulphur, from which thick fetid clouds arose, and in which great multitudes of demons were waiting to assail him. Recovering his courage he went forward until he arrived at the other side of the bridge. Here the scene completely changed. The visions of hell and purgatory gave way to that of the celestial paradise. He was led to a gate in a resplendent wall, which was set with pearls and precious stones. This heavenly sight caused him to forget

the dangers and sufferings he had hitherto undergone. Here the most enchanting scenes and the sweetest melody so captivated his heart that he desired never to depart from this paradise. But he was not so permitted; for, he was compelled to return to the entrance of the cave, where the fifteen ecclesiastics awaited his coming. Having spent a day in their company, and being told by them the coming events of his life, he left the cave, and received the congratulations of the Prior and Canons on his safe return. After spending fifteen more days on the island, and after relating his adventures and visions to the community of monks, he took his departure from Lough Derg; and amongst others communicated an account of his pilgrimage to Gilbert of Lud, or Louth, a Cistercian monk, who in turn related it to Henry of Saltrey. After leading a truly Christian and edifying life to an advanced old age, death closed the pilgrim soldier's career:—

"He died and went the bright way,
To the bliss that lasts for aye;
To that bliss may He us bring
That of all is Lord and King."

Henry of Saltrey thus accounts for his knowledge of Owen's vision:—

"He says that Gervasius, abbot of Louth, or Lud, in Lincolnshire, obtained from King Stephen a grant of land in Ireland upon which to build a monastery. For this purpose one of his monks, Gilbert, was sent into Ireland with the Knight Owen, who accompanied him as servant and interpreter of the Irish language. Whenever they were alone together, the monk asked him minutely concerning Purgatory, and the marvellous modes of punishment which he had there seen and felt; but the Knight, who could never hear of Purgatory without weeping bitterly, told his friend, for his edification, and under the

seal of secrecy, all that he had seen and experienced, and affirmed that he had seen it all with his own eyes. By the care and diligence of Gilbert, all that the Knight had said was reduced to writing, together with the narratives of the bishops and other ecclesiastics of that country, who, for truth's sake, gave their testimony to the facts. Lately, also, I did speak with one who was nephew of Patrick, the third of that name, the companion of St. Malachias, by name Florentinianus,* in whose bishopric, as he said, that Purgatory was: of whom having seriously inquired, he answered: 'Truly, brother, that place is within my bishopric, and many perish in that Purgatory; and those, who perchance return, do, by reason of the extreme torments they have endured, ever look pale and languid.' The aforesaid narrative the said Gilbert did often repeat in my hearing, according as he had often heard it from the Knight."

Henry of Saltrey wrote his account of Owen's pilgrimage in the year 1153. The narrative was speedily translated into several languages, and most of the religious

* No such name is to be met with in Ware's List of Bishops, for either Clogher, or Raphoe, about the time in question. In Ware's *Annals of Ireland*, under the year 1174, is recorded the death of one Florence O'Gorman, Lector in the Academy of Armagh, a man of great learning, who had received his education for several years in England and France. Though not a bishop, he may have had some official connection with St. Patrick's Purgatory. This I admit is an improbable and not sufficiently sustained conjecture.

In the List of Bishops of the diocese of Derry at that period we meet with one Florence O'Cervallen, who may have been the informant of Henry of Saltrey. This Florence ruled the See of Derry for forty-six years, and died anno 1230, aged eighty-six years. Of him it could not with strict propriety be said, that St. Patrick's Purgatory was "within his bishopric;" but the words may be taken in a wide sense to signify that it was close to and adjoining his diocese. For, as a matter of fact, the diocese of Derry adjoins the territory of Termon-Daveog, and one of its parishes, Termonamongan, approaches almost to the verge of Lough Derg.

houses over the Continent, as well as in these kingdoms, possessed a copy. A metrical version, after the style so popular at the period, was also composed, and at the present day several of those metrical versions are extant. Two of them are in the British Museum, also a copy in the Cotton collection, and it dates from the fifteenth century. There is another metrical version in the Auchinleck collection in Scotland; and Sir Walter Scott mentions in his *Border Minstrelsy*, that there is a curious Metrical Romance in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, called "The Legend of Sir Owain." He gives some stanzas from it. It was written in the early part of the fourteenth century. Marie of France, the celebrated Anglo-Norman poetess of the twelfth century, has versified the legend in her own language, of which an extract, literally translated, is given in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology* (Vol. IV.) In that Journal is to be found a learned article on St. Patrick's Purgatory, by William Pinkerton. An antiquarian illustration is there reproduced, taken from an illuminated MS. of the fifteenth century, belonging to the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. The same illustration is given (but in a ruder manner) in the "Book of Days," and also in Miss Cusack's "Life of St. Patrick." The inscription, which is as quaint as the drawing, runs thus:—"Ici commence le Purgatoire de Monseigneur St. Patrice." In September, 1887, I had occasion to consult in the *Bibliotheque de la Ville, Palais St. Vaast*, Arras, a MS. copy * of the narrative of Henry of Saltrey,

* This rare MS. is classed in the Library "No. 897." It is written on white vellum, and includes, besides the "Legende au Purgatoire de St. Patrice," the following:—"Le Roman de la Rose," "Le Testament de Jean de Meun," "La Legende de Fulbert," etc. The Library Catalogue thus describes this remarkable illuminated volume:—"In folio parvo—velim blanc—trace au crayon—deux colonnes—14 siecle—ecriture de romans—miniatures grossierement executees."

in French, of the fourteenth century. At the opening page is given an illustration in red, green, and white colours, representing St. Patrick, clad in monastic dress, and witnessing a pilgrim entering the penitential cave or "Purgatory." The narrative comprises fifteen columns of the MS. It commences, as the Catalogue describes, "*sans titre ni rubrique,*" with the Latin word "*Incipit,*" and its ending is "Explicit le Purgatoire St. Patrice," in large letters. The first letter of the text is richly illuminated in colours of blue and red, and the opening paragraph runs thus:—"Sains Patris prechoit en Irlande, et pour ce que il trouvoit la gent bestial, grant paine metoit de eulz retraire de leur erreur pour la pavour d'infer, et pour l'amour des joyes de paradis. Mais ils desoyent que ja ne se convertiroyent, ne pour miracles, ne pour sa predications, se aucune d'eulz ne veoit le tormens des pecheurs et les joyes des justes." From the second column I give the following brief extracts:—"Et sistit illuc une eglise et sanctos canones del ordine saint Augustin et erigit seu enclost la fosse et muros au front de l'eglise . . . . . et ille fosse est appele Purgatoire Saint Patris . . . et eglise est appele reglis."

When we examine critically the pilgrimage of the Knight Owen, we find no grounds for saying that the penitential exercises as then enjoined differed in any essential particular from the ritual of the pilgrimage at present in observance. Making due allowance for the fanciful embellishments of the pilgrim's narrative, as also of the chronicler, we can infer the following facts. 1st, That permission to enter the island was then as now indispensable. 2nd, That a spiritual retreat of fifteen days was required, and Holy Communion administered before entering the Purgatorial Cave. This is still observed, but in a mitigated and modified degree. 3rd, That

spiritual admonitions had been given, and that the pilgrim remained in the grotto of penance twenty-four hours. This discipline is still maintained.

As to the perilous journey over the slippery bridge, this may be only a poetical exaggeration of the danger incurred by the voyage from the Island of the Purgatory, the present Station Island, to Saints' Island, where the Augustinian monastery stood. This latter island was approached, as we have already seen, by a bridge of beams, which spanned the narrow channel separating Saints' Island from the mainland. In fine, the pilgrim, on reaching the monastery, after the long and arduous course of penance he had passed through, might well imagine himself in some terrestrial paradise, and the devotional rule of life followed by the monks served only to strengthen the idea.

Neither is there anything improbable in the fact, that to a pilgrim, such as the Knight Owen, after undergoing a rigorous penance, almost beyond the powers of human endurance, and to the rigours of which many had previously succumbed, should be vouchsafed a sight of the various degrees of punishment for sin, and also of the happy state of the blessed. Such visions God has deigned to grant to many of His servants at various periods; among the rest we may mention as instances, St. Catherine and St. Teresa. In the midst of a sinful age, the narrative of the pilgrim soldier arrested the minds of men; and thus it served, under Divine Providence, to spread abroad the fame of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and to attract to its sanctuary from every nation throughout Christendom pilgrims of every rank from the prince to the peasant.

The legend as described by Henry of Saltrey and Mathew of Paris, was copied from monastery to monastery until it became familiar over the Continent of Europe. It

found its way into the hands of the great medieval poets. Ariosto read it, as is clearly seen from the extract prefixed to this chapter. Dante,* too, was conversant with it as appears from the plan and various passages of the *Divina Comedia;* and Denis Florence M'Carthy, referring to this legend, says, "It is not too much to say that without it the *Divina Comedia* of Dante would never have taken the form it did." Upon this pilgrimage of the Knight Owen, the Spanish poet Calderon, so celebrated for his sacred dramas, founded one of his most charming plays, to which reference has already been made, and to which further reference, and at greater length, shall occur hereafter.

* A remarkably able article from the pen of a learned lady, the late Mrs. Sarah Atkinson, has appeared in the *Irish Monthly* of the year 1884 (pp. 74-127), on the "Dittamondo" of Fazio degli Uberti. The reader will find in it not only Uberti's reference to Lough Derg, but also an exhaustive treatment of St. Patrick's Purgatory, as it was known to medieval writers, and the influence which the vision of the Knight Owen, the voyage of St. Brendan and the vision of Tundale had upon Dante's *Divina Comedia.*

CHAPTER IX.

TIERNAN O'ROURKE, PRINCE OF BREFFNY, ON PILGRIMAGE AT LOUGH DERG—DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN PILGRIMS—NARRATIVE OF JACOBUS DE VORAGINE.

TIERNAN O'ROURKE, prince of Breffny, was one of the most warlike of Irish chieftains. For about half a century, from 1124 till 1172, when he met with an untimely death, he took part in the wars, predatory incursions, deeds of daring and bloodshed, which distracted his unhappy country, as also in the patriotic effort to resist the English invasion. In 1152, his wife, Dervorgilla, that "degenerate daughter of Erin," eloped with his rival, the infamous M'Murrough. Dervorgil, after reaching the advanced age of eighty-five, closed her ill-fated career in the Convent of Mellifont, in the year 1193, after having undergone a lengthened course of penance. It is said that her elopement with M'Murrough took place whilst her husband was away on pilgrimage, and the tradition is kept at Lough Derg that O'Rourke sought the penitential refuge of St. Patrick's Purgatory to find consolation for his troubled conscience; and, that after performing the usual round of exercises at that retreat, he returned home to his castle at Dromohair to find himself betrayed by his rival. Dr. O'Donovan, in his *Donegal Letters*, also refers to the same tradition. This incident is wedded to immortal verse in the well-known melody of Moore, beginning thus:—

"The valley lay smiling before me,
Where lately I left her behind," etc.

Nor will it militate against this tradition, to say that on the occasion referred to, Tiernan O'Rourke made pilgrimage to Clonmacnoise, or to some other of the many places of pilgrimage, which were then frequented throughout Ireland; for, about that period it was usual for pilgrims to make a circuit of "the most famous sanctuaries in Ireland." Even those who journeyed to foreign sanctuaries, fortified and prepared themselves for such distant journeys, by first making pilgrimage to the most famous shrines of religion in their own country. Of this usage different instances are recorded in the registries of Armagh; and a remarkable instance is there related of one Aeneas M'Michael, who, by way of penance, visited no less than seventeen places of pilgrimage throughout Ireland, among the rest "St. Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg, in O'Donnell's country."

The Rev. Mervyn Archdall, of the Fermanagh family of that name, who wrote his *Monasticon Hibernicon* about the middle of the last century, mentions a few facts regarding St. Patrick's Purgatory, during the time the Augustinians were in charge of it, which I have not seen stated elsewhere.

Archdall writes:—"St. Dabheoc is said to have been buried in the abbey" (on Saints' Island). "It had a fine chapel, with convenient houses for the monks, the remains of which may yet be seen. One of the St. Patricks was Prior here about the year 850.

"Nothwithstanding the reputed holiness of this celebrated monastery, it was plundered and reduced to ashes by Bratachus O'Boyle and MacMahon, A.D. 1207. John was Prior in 1353."

It would seem that this John was succeeded in the same year by another Prior, named Paul; for, in the Palatinate Library at Vienna, there is a MS. account of the visit of a

noble Hungarian, by name George Chrissiphani. His pilgrimage was made in the year 1353, and it was attested by the certificates of Richard the Primate, Nicholas MacCatsaid, or Cassidy, Bishop of Clogher; Paul, Prior of the Purgatory, and John de Fronwick, Prior-General of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland.

The history of Lough Derg during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries is to be found chiefly in the accounts written of it by distinguished foreigners, who braved the dangers of a journey, then so fraught with peril, in order to pass through the penitential exercises of this celebrated sanctuary. Besides the account of St. Patrick's Purgatory, founded on the legend of the Knight, which legend was incorporated in that portion of the history of Roger of Wendover, which, as Mr. Pinkerton says, is erroneously ascribed to William of Paris, there are several other manuscript accounts extant in different libraries. One of them is to be found among the Barberini MSS., and is called *Purgatorium S. Patricii, narrante Gilberto monacho Ludensi, post abbate de Basingwereck in Anglia.* Another, in the same collection, is called *Visio ejusdem fratris conversi in Anglia, quam habuit circa annum* 1196. Another MS. in the Cottonian collection, is called *Opusculum de quadam visione terribili de suppliciis animarum post obitum corporis: facta Edmundo, monacho de Eynesham, regnante R. Ricardo.*

The repute of St. Patrick's Purgatory had gained a widespread celebrity during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries from the legends and accounts already mentioned, and also from the writings during those centuries of such celebrities as Giraldus Cambrensis, Froissart, and Cæsar of Heisterback. About fifty years after the descent of the Knight Owen, Cæsarius thus writes:—"If

any one doubt of Purgatory, let him go to Scotia and enter the Purgatory of St. Patrick, and his doubts will be expelled." No wonder, therefore, that despite the difficulties of travelling in those remote times, so many distinguished pilgrims braved the dangers of the journey, and came from the distant countries of Europe to atone for their faults by a course of religious penance at this terrestrial Purgatory. During the reign of Edward III.* and the Viceroyalty of Almaric St. Amand, in 1357, certificates are found enrolled in the archives of England declaring that Malatesta Ungaro, of Rimini, and Nicolo de Beccario, of Ferrara, had performed pilgrimages to the famous Purgatory of St. Patrick, Lough Derg. Ungaro, lord of Rimini, Fano, Pesano, and Fossombrone, was renowned in Italy for his warlike enterprises, his knowledge and piety. "Whereas," wrote King Edward, "Malatesta Ungaro, of Rimini, a nobleman and knight, hath presented himself before us, and declared that, travelling from his own country, he had, with many bodily toils, visited the Purgatory of St. Patrick, in our land of Ireland, and for the space of a day and a night, as is the custom, remained therein enclosed, and now earnestly beseeches us that, for the confirmation of the truth thereof, we should grant him our royal letters: We, therefore, considering the dangers and perils of his pilgrimage, and although the assertion of such a noble might on this suffice, yet we are further certified thereof by letters of our trusty and beloved Almaric de St. Amand, Knight, Justiciary of Ireland, and from the Prior and Convent of the said Purgatory, and others of great credit, as also by clear evidence, that the said nobleman had duly and courageously performed his pilgrimage; we have consequently thought worthy to give

* *Vide* Mr. Gilbert's *History of the Viceroys of Ireland*, p. 212.

favourably unto him our royal authority concerning the same, to the end there may be no doubt made of the premised; and that the truth may more clearly appear, we have deemed proper to grant unto him these our letters, under our royal seal."

In the year 1365, the prior of Lough Derg received a letter, asking him to give a kind reception to two distinguished foreign pilgrims, John Bonham and Guido Cessy. The commendatory letter, written by Primate Milo Sweetman, is quoted by bishop Jones,* *Ex Registro Milonis*, as found by him in the Archiepiscopal Library at Armagh. This is a free translation of it, as given in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*:—

"Milo, by divine permission, Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of Ireland, to the religious and prudent man, the Prior of St. Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg, in the diocese of Clogher, and to all others the clergy and laity in the province of Armagh, everlasting health in the Lord. John Bonham and Guido Cessy, coming to us, have related, that they, for devotion's sake, have gone on pilgrimage and visited many holy places; and that they are desirous, for the health of their souls, to visit the place called the Purgatory of St. Patrick, our patron, which is in the diocese of Clogher aforesaid. We do, therefore, entreat and exhort in the Lord all and singular, by whom these pilgrims may pass, to entertain and receive them courteously; and that of the goods which God hath bestowed upon you, you may afford them charitable aid; nor permit, inasmuch as in you lieth, any molestation or disturbance to be given to them. By which means we doubt not but that you shall be made partakers of their devout labours. Given at the city of Down, the 15th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1365, and the fifth of our consecration."

In 1396, during the reign of Richard II. and the Vice-

* See his work, *Patricius his Purgatory*, 1647.

royalty of de Mortimer, "Ramon, Viscount de Perellos, Senor de la Baronia de Seret, Knight of Rhodes, and Chamberlain to King Richard's father-in-law, Charles VI. of France, waited on de Mortimer at Dublin. This nobleman arrived with letters from the King of England for safe conduct to visit the Purgatory of St. Patrick, with a retinue of twenty men and thirty horses. Ramon had been in the army of Charles V. of France; became Master of the Horse to Juan of Arragon, where his estates lay, and that king gave him command of three galleys which he sent to aid Clement VII. After the death of Clement, Ramon served Benedict VIII. until he determined, notwithstanding the Papal dissuasion, to visit St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland, where he expected to learn intelligence of the fate of the soul of his beloved King Juan. He tells us that at Dublin he visited the Earl of March, King Richard's cousin, and Viceroy in Ireland, who, having perused the royal letters, received him very honourably; but endeavoured, with all his power, to dissuade him from persevering in an undertaking which he declared to be of the most perilous nature. As Ramon was not deterred by these representations, the Viceroy despatched him to Drogheda, with letters to John de Colton, who, having distinguished himself in the service of England, had been promoted from the Deanery of St. Patrick's, at Dublin, to the Archbishopric of Armagh. De Colton also endeavourd to deter him from venturing into the territories of the northern Irish, who had made serious inroads upon the see-lands of the English Archbishop of Armagh. Ramon, persevering in his resolution, passed safely, as a pilgrim, into Donegal, where, with many others on the same mission bound, he was, he records, loaded with gifts, and escorted safely to his destination * by the native chiefs.

* Taken from Gilbert's *History of the Viceroys*, pp. 275-276.

whose ancestors, according to their legends, had come to Erin from his native land of Spain."*

John Garry and Francis Proty, priests of Lyons, and John Burgess, also applied for leave to go to the Purgatory "sanctified by the forty days' fast and prayer of St. Patrick."

In the year 1409 Sir William Staunton descended to the cave. He wrote an account of his pilgrimage, which runs through several hundred pages. It is entitled, "Here begynneth ye revelacon, ye which William Staunton saw in Patrick's Purgatorie, the Friday next after ye feast of ye exaltation of the Crosse, 3rd of May, in the year of our Lord MCCCCIX." Another account of the pilgrimage was written about this period by a Knight of Hungary. It is named *Præmium Memoriale super visitatione Domini Laurentii Ratholdi militis et baronis Hungariæ factum de Purgatorio S. Patricii in insula Hiberniæ.* Froissart relates that Sir W. Lysle and another Knight had visited the cave when Richard was King of England.

In the Bodleian Library is preserved a MS. called *Tractatus brevis, sed imperfectus de S. Patricii Purgatorio.* In the same place a MS. entitled *Narratio de pœnis infernalibus*, in which there is mention of St. Patrick's Purgatory. In the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, there is a MS. styled *Vita Sancti Patricii Episcopi et Confessoris; item de Purgatorio Hiberniæ.* There is also a MS. in the Vatican Library by Peter Lombard, Primate of Ireland, which is designated *Relatio de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii in Hibernia.*

* On his arrival at the island, the Prior demanded his reasons for wishing to enter the Purgatory. He said to him:—"Perdifficilem atque periculosam rem suscepisti, quamque pauci tentarunt nedum sunt assecuti. Fateor equidem facilem esse Purgatorii descensum, sed revocare gradus, hoc opus, hic labor."

Besides these there are many other manuscripts treating of St. Patrick's Purgatory, which are still extant in several of the principal Libraries throughout Europe, which fact of itself clearly shows how widespread was the fame of this pilgrimage during the middle ages, and what a firm hold it had taken on the religious sympathies of that period.

In a work of the fifteenth century, written by Jacobus de Voragine,* and printed at Nuremberg in the year 1482, under the title *Legenda Aurea*, is recorded an account of a vision with which a certain pilgrim, named Nicholas, was favoured at St. Patrick's Purgatory. So closely does this narrative resemble that of Henry of Saltrey, that we might almost suppose it to have been borrowed from that writer.

Of this narrative, written in Latin, I here insert the English version, not because I attach much historical importance to it, but principally as a specimen of the religious tales of the period.

Jacobus de Voragine writes :—

"A long time after the death of St. Patrick, a nobleman, named Nicholas, who had been guilty of a great many sins, being smote with contrition, wished to undertake a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory. Having endured, as was the custom, various acts of mortification during the space of fifteen days, he gained admittance within the enclosure, the gate having been opened with a key, which was kept in the

* Jacobus de Voragine was a Dominican friar, and Archbishop of Genoa in 1292. Before the revival of letters set in, his "Golden Legend" was the delight of our ancestors. No monastery wanted a copy of it; it was to be found, besides, in many private Libraries, and for a long time after the invention of printing, few books issued more frequently from the press. It lost much of its repute in consequence of the Lives of the Saints published about 1480 by Mombritius, also of the Lives of the Saints published by Surius, a Carthusian monk.—See Alban Butler's "Lives of the Saints," Introduction.

abbey. He then descended into the afore-named cave or Purgatory, on the side of which he observed a doorway. Entering by this he found an oratory, into which some monks, clothed in white vesture and repeating the divine office, had come, who forewarned Nicholas that he had many temptations of the devil to encounter.

"When he inquired of them what help he should have against the tempter, they replied, 'When you shall feel yourself afflicted by punishments, immediately call out and say, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' The monks referred to having retired, demons forthwith appear, and at first flatter him with kind promises, saying that they would protect him and bring him back in safety, if only he would obey them.

"But since he refused to obey them, immediately he hears the roaring of different wild beasts, which made him imagine that all the elements had clashed together, upon which he exclaimed with breathless terror, 'Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me,' etc., and forthwith this dreadful tumult ceased.

"On being conveyed to another place, here also appeared to him a number of demons, who said, 'Do you imagine that you have escaped our hands? By no means. But now your afflictions and tortures shall commence in real earnest.' And behold a great and devouring fire there appears, the demons meanwhile saying, 'Unless you submit to us, we shall cast you into this fire to burn,' but as he refused, they seized him and cast him into the fire. In the midst of his tortures, however, he cried out, 'Jesus,' etc., and the fire at once became extinguished.

"At length, having been conducted to another place, he sees men burning alive, and scourged by demons with red-hot lashes of iron, which cut to the very entrails. They cried out with pain, 'spare us, Spare us,' but the demons only scourged them the more piteouslessly. Others he sees whose limbs serpents were devouring, and whose entrails were being drawn

out by fiery hooks of iron; but as Nicholas would not yield to their suggestions, he is cast into the same fire, and is tormented by the same punishments until he cried out, 'Jesus, have mercy on me,' etc., and immediately he is liberated from his sufferings. Having been conducted thence to another place, he sees large pools of boiling metal, in which some had one foot, others two: some were standing knee-deep in those pools, others up to the body, and others to the breast, neck and eyes. Witnessing all their torments, he invoked the aid of God, and passed safely onward to a wide pit, from which issued a horrible smoke and a most intolerable stench. The demons told him—'The place which you now behold is hell, in which our master, Beelzebub, dwells, and into this abyss we shall cast you if you do not yield to us, and after having been cast into it, you cannot find any means of escape.' But as he spurned their threats, they seized him and cast him into the pit, where he was filled with such vehement torture that he had almost forgotten to call upon the name of God. After a moment's reflection, however, he expressed the name of Jesus in his heart, as he was unable to utter it with his lips, and immediately he escaped uninjured, and the whole host of the demons, his tormentors, having been completely vanquished, left him.

"Having been led to another place, he sees a bridge over which it was necessary he should pass. The bridge was very narrow, and smooth and slippery as ice. Beneath it flowed a stream of sulphur and fire. Then recalling to mind the words that delivered him from so many dangers, he approached it with confidence, and placing one foot on the bridge, he says, 'Jesus, have mercy,' etc. Then there arose a loud cry, which so terrified him that he could hardly retain his foothold till he repeated the same prayer, which he kept reciting at each step, and thus did he cross the bridge in safety.

"Thence he reaches a most delightful meadow, where the sweet odour of flowers charmed his senses. Here two fair youths appear to him, and conduct him towards a most beauti-

ful city, resplendent with gold and gems. From its gate issued the sweetest fragrance, which at once relieved him from the sickening sensation of the sufferings and foul stench he had just escaped. They told him that this city was paradise, into which Nicholas was most desirous to enter, till the youths already referred to told him that he should first return to his kindred, pass through the ways by which he had come, that the devils could not injure him, but would fly away in terror at his sight, that in thirty days after he should rest in peace, and then enter that celestial abode as a perpetual citizen.

"Then Nicholas, having returned from the Purgatory, finds himself among his friends, and after telling them all that befel him, when thirty days had passed over he calmly rested in the Lord."

This legend, as also that related of the Knight Owen, in the twelfth century, supplied the Spanish poet, Calderon, who lived in the seventeenth century, with groundwork for one of the most charming of his sacred dramas. It is called *Purgatorio de San Patricio*. A metrical version of it was written by the lamented Denis Florence M'Carthy, and published in the year 1847. It closely corresponds in metre with Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. As the concluding part of the *Purgatorio* of Calderon, where he represents the pilgrim after passing through the different stages of punishments, and arriving before the celestial paradise, is singularly sweet and interesting, I shall give it at some length:—

"Ere I reached the gates they open'd,
And the Saints in long procession
Came to meet me, men and women,
Young and old, and youths and maidens.
All approached serene and happy.
Choirs of Seraphim and Angels,
Breathing heaven's delicious music,
Sweetly sung divinest anthems.

After these at length approached me
The resplendent, the most glorious,
The great Patrick, the Apostle.
Much that dazzling sight rejoiced me,
For by it I was enabled
To fulfil my early promise,
In my lifetime to behold him.
He and all the rest embraced me,
Pleased at my extreme good fortune.
Bidding me farewell, he told me
That no living man could enter
That most glorious, happy city;
But that I to earth returning,
Should await God's time and pleasure.
Back the proper way I wandered
Unobstructed by the demons,
And at length approached the entrance,
When you came to seek and see me.
Since I have escaped this danger,
Holy Fathers, all I covet
Is to live and die among you."

CHAPTER X.

LOUGH DERG DURING THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—REPUTED TRAGIC OCCURRENCE THERE—THE DUTCH MONK—SUPPRESSION OF THE CAVE BY ORDER OF THE POPE.

ALREADY have we seen how princes, knights, and nobles from distant lands had braved the perils of a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory, then esteemed an adventure more heroic than that of the battlefield. Quite a different class of personage is presented to us in the letters of St. Catherine of Sienna.* We there read how a Carthusian monk, Don Giovanni by name, of the Certosa, Rome, desiring to leave his religious enclosure in order to make a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, and failing to receive his superior's sanction, fell into great trouble of mind thereat. St. Catherine, on being acquainted with the fact, wrote him a letter, which is an admirable discourse on obedience and patience, counselling him to submit his will in everything to his superior, but especially in the matter which she had heard from the Visitor:—"My dear son," she concludes, "bow down your head in holy obedience, and remain in your cell embracing the tree of the most holy Cross. Take care, as you value the life of your soul and fear to displease Almighty God, that you do not follow your own will."†

* Vol. III., p. 201, published at Florence, 1860.

† See Essay on "The Dittamondo" in *Irish Monthly* of 1884, p. 132.

A thrilling story is narrated in the *Dublin Penny Journal* of June 25th, 1836, in reference to a tragedy, stated to have occurred at Lough Derg towards the close of the fourteenth century. We there learn how Count Raymond, and another Knight, named Ugolino, had been serving in the wars against the Moslems. Ugolino, having been instrumental in saving Raymond's life, was invited at the close of the Crusade to accompany him to his home. There, despite their disparity of rank and family, a close intimacy sprung up between Ugolino and Raymond's sister, Madeleine. Raymond, on discovering that they were pledged to marry, in an outburst of passion plunged his dagger into his sister's breast, thus puttting her to death for the honour of his house. Thereupon Ugolino vowed that he would never rest until that same poignard had pierced her murderer's breast. The story (very graphically told in the Journal referred to, and also, but more succinctly, in the "Handbook of South-Western Donegal" by the late Monsignor Stephens of Killybegs), concludes by saying, that Raymond was praying in a cell at St. Patrick's Purgatory, when he was confronted by the avenger of his sister's death, Ugolino, who relentlessly put him to death with the dagger bearing the blood-stains of his murdered sister, Madeleine.

According to a popular tradition, not uncommon among the Irish peasantry, wherever a murder or other tragic event occurs, the spot is supposed to be haunted for long after by the victim's spirit or ghost. The tragic death of Raymond gave rise, as might be expected, to a ghost story* at Lough Derg. Local residents will tell how, till

* In a collection of poems by T. D. M'Gee, and published by Mrs. Sadlier, New York, 1869, there is an interesting legend of Lough Derg, entitled the "Penitence of Don Diego Riaz."

The wanderings of this Knight to distant Peru are there described

lately, a ghost, habited in the garb of a pilgrim of the olden time, used to pace up and down the island during the still hours of evening twilight. That a tragedy of some kind took place here in the fifteenth century would seem to be pretty clear, but who the perpetrator of it was, and who the victim, is somewhat shrouded in mystery. Doubtless it cast a gloom over Lough Derg; and it would seem to be but the harbinger of a train of evils which were to befall this sanctuary, and which were to avenge the outraged majesty of God for the desecration of His holy place.

Another difficulty of a serious nature also occurred to disturb the even tenor of its way. Its gifts and revenues had so increased, about the period at which we have arrived, as to afford ground not merely for grave responsibility in their administration, but also for considerable jealousy as to their allocation. Raymond Maguire, an Augustinian, was Prior of the Purgatory in the year 1455. Donald, or Daniel M'Grath, who was probably Coarb of the termon-lands, and Thomas M'Creanyre, or Treanor, abbot of SS. Peter and Paul's at Armagh, on the ground that his monastery was the mother-house of the establishment at Lough Derg, strove to prevent Raymond Maguire, its Prior, from disposing of the proceeds from the Purga-

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in verse, and his travels thence, accompanied by one attendant, to obtain peace of soul at St. Patrick's shrine. Don Diego died on the way ere he saw the Irish shore. His attendant plighted

> "To journey to the 'Refuge of the Lake,'
> Before St. Patrick's solitary shrine,
> A nine days' vigil for his rest to make,
> Living on bitter bread and penitential wine."

On his way to the island his dead master appeared to him, as the legend says, and rowed the boat, in which he embarked, to the island, on reaching which he vanished.

tory. Maguire appealed to the Metropolitan, and to Rome, with the result that the community at Lough Derg were confirmed in their title to the religious offerings of the place, and the others were ordered, under pain of excommunication, to give no further annoyance.

Under the year 1462, the Four Masters relate, that "the Prior of Devenish, *i.e.* Bartholomew, the son of Hugh O'Flanagan, died at Lough Derg." This was the Prior, who repaired, or rebuilt the great abbey church of Devenish, as appears from the inscribed stone, fully described in that interesting handbook, Wakeman's *Guide to Lough Erne.*

While the fame of St. Patrick's Purgatory had been the theme of so many writers, an incident occurred towards the end of the fifteenth century, which, for a time at least, tended to mar its celebrity. A monk, from the monastery of Eymstede, or Amsterdam, in Holland, hearing of the fame of this western pilgrimage, and of the visions vouchsafed to the pious votaries thereat, came to the determination of going thither, resolved upon doing greater penances than those he had hitherto exercised, and also with the purpose of testing the accuracy of the sensational stories related of it. Having arrived at the lake, in the year 1494, the prior, before admitting him, required that he should first obtain the bishop's permission. The bishop in turn, when granting leave, directed him to pay the usual fee for admission. Those fees were devoted to a threefold purpose; a portion went to the support of the religious community, who ministered to the wants of the pilgrims; a moiety also was devoted to the maintenance in proper repair of the churches and other buildings on the island; and the remainder was expended on the relief and support of such destitute persons as sought the hospitality of the monks; for, in those days the

poor received lodging, food and raiment in the monastic houses. The Dutch monk was asked for an alms which he considered somewhat large, as he was poor. This made him querulous and censorious. Finally, having obtained admittance, he spent one day in the cave. "But" (says the author of the Bollandist MS. in which the story is related) "he came out wondering greatly that he had neither seen, heard, nor undergone any of the visions and other experiences with which so many others were said to have been privileged. The everyday routine of prayer and penance was the only vision vouchsafed to him in this earthly purgatory. Disappointed and chagrined he went straightway to Rome and laid a prejudicial report of the pilgrimage before the Sovereign Pontiff, Alexander VI. He represented the exactions of the prior, prince and bishop of the island—"*Omnes enim pecuniam petierunt.*" He mentioned his own experiences of it, how he had not been favoured with those glimpses of future punishment and bliss, which were ascribed to it. His words added force to prejudices already forming against it over the Continent; and thus its temporary suppression had been determined upon until such time as the abuses complained of might be remedied. Cardinal Orsini, O.P., Archbishop of Benevento, and afterwards raised to the Papal throne under the name of Benedict XIII., in his Sermon* on Purgatory, thus gives the narrative of the Dutch monk:—

"It remains for me to answer the third question, viz., if at the present time there exists such a Purgatory. In doing so it

* This Sermon is classed "No. 30," and is preserved in the Library of San Clemente, Rome. The copy from which those extracts are taken was made out and verified by the Very Rev. M. A. Costello, Rector San Clemente, on the 20th February, 1887, for Rev. James O'Hanlon, Stafford (to whom I am indebted for it), and translated for me by a competent Italian scholar.

will suffice to relate what happened to a Canon Regular from that part of Holland in which is the monastery *Eymstudense*, during the pontificate of Alexander VI. in 1594. This man, with the desire of greater perfection, repaired to Ireland, and having heard great things concerning the Purgatory of St. Patrick, with a lively faith and with the desire of satisfying divine justice, asked leave of the Prior of the monastery to descend into the cave. He did go down; and the trembling Canon every moment expected to see, hear, and perhaps also to suffer the horrible things which had been mentioned of the place, but after remaining an entire day and night without experiencing the slightest suffering, he was taken out the following day. He thus proved by experience that the story was all fiction on the part of the custodians of the place, who had spread these reports for the simple purpose of collecting alms from a too-credulous people. Having gone to Rome he informed the Sovereign Pontiff of all the circumstances; and he, the Pope, ordered the Bishop of the diocese and the Prior of the monastery to have the said cave closed up with earth and stones, in order that the mistaken faith of those resorting thither should cease. This was actually done, and an authentic document confirming the fact was given to the same Supreme Pontiff."*

* The same illustrious authority goes on to say: —"Thence you ought to be able to infer that if God, through the merits of St. Patrick, and during the Saint's lifetime, performed the miracle of rendering visible to the people what faith teaches us of the punishments and rewards reserved for us in the next life, the miracle ceased after the conversion of the people to the faith, since the motive for it had ceased, and there only remained the site of the ancient and celebrated Purgatory of Ireland as a testimony of the prodigy formerly performed. In fact you should observe that the same thing happened to the cave of St. Patrick which took place with regard to the brazen serpent of Moses, which cured those bitten by the fiery serpents in the desert, Num. xxi. 9. It remained afterwards in Israel in attestation of the divine mercy until a time when some of the people abusing it, and having recourse to it through wrong motives, it was taken down and destroyed by the holy King Ezechias, 4 Reg. xviii. 4. From the example above recited of the

In the "Annals of the Four Masters" there is found no allusion to the closing of the cave on Saints' Island by order of the Pope; mention is made of it, however, in the "Annals of Ulster." The reasons assigned by the Bollandists and the "Annals of Ulster" for the suppression of the cave are quite different. The Bollandists say it was ordered to be closed because it had become "an occasion of shameful avarice." It would appear as if they grounded their opinion on the report of the monk of Eymstede; and though this may have hastened the action of Rome in the matter, we are nowhere told it was the only cause to draw forth that decision. The reason for its suppression, as set forth in the "Annals of Ulster," I hold to be much more tenable, namely, "that it was not the Purgatory" (that is, the place or cave of purgation) "which the Lord had shown to St. Patrick." On this subject no better authority can be adduced than the compiler of the "Annals of Ulster," the celebrated Cathal Maguire; for he was not only deeply versed in his country's lore above all his contemporaries, but was also, at the time of the edict in question, a high dignitary and official of the diocese in which the Purgatory is situated; and, over and above all this, he was appointed by the Pope to assist in carrying out the Papal decree, and hence we may reasonably presume that he was fully acquainted with the causes which led to its fulmination.

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penitential soldier who declared that he saw apparitions of demons jeering at the sufferings of the condemned souls, there arises a doubt which our own St. Thomas solves in his Supplement 72, '*Utrum anima in Purgatorio a dæmonibus torqueantur?*' And the holy Master answers —'*Non torquentur per dæmones quorum victores exiterunt*,' but from the justice of God alone. It is quite possible '*quod eas ad loca pœnarum comitentur*' to gratify themselves by the pains which the souls suffer there."

In the words of the "Annals of Ulster"—

"A.D. 1497. The cave of Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Gerg, was destroyed about the festival of St. Patrick this year, by the Guardian of Donegal and by the representative of the Bishop in the deanery of Lough Erne [*i.e.* Cathal Maguire], by authority of the Pope, the people in general having understood from the history of the Knight, and other old books, that this was not the Purgatory which St. Patrick obtained from God, though the people in general were visiting it."

Now, as this Cathal or Charles Maguire was one of the most illustrious sons of the diocese of Clogher, and one of the most distinguished Irish ecclesiastics in any age, I will be pardoned for here inserting his obit as recorded by Roderick O'Cassidy in the "Annals of Ulster," which were brought by Maguire from A.D. 444 down to 1498, the year of his death, and continued by O'Cassidy to the year 1541. O'Cassidy writes:—

"Anno Domini 1498. A great mournful news throughout all Ireland this year, viz., the following—Cathal Oge MacManus Maguire died this year. He was Canon Chorister at Armagh, and in the bishopric of Clogher, and Dean of Lough Erne, and Pastor of Enniskeen, in Lough Erne, and the representative of a Bishop" (*i.e.* Vicar-General) "for fifteen years before his death. He was a precious stone, a bright gem, a luminous star, a treasury of wisdom, and a fruitful branch of the Canon; and a fountain of charity, meekness, and mildness; a dove in purity of heart, and a turtle in chastity; the person to whom the literati, and the poor, and the destitute paupers of Ireland were most thankful; one who was full of grace and wisdom in every science to the time of his death, in law, physic, and philosophy, and in all the Gaelic sciences; and one who made, gathered, and collected this book from many other books. He died of *Galar Breac*" (the small-pox) "on the tenth of the Calends of April, being Wednesday, *lxo. anno ætatis suæ*. And let every person,

who shall read and profit by this book, give a blessing on the soul of MacManus (*i.e.* Cathal Maguire)."

The *situs* of the cave ordered by Pope Alexander VI. to be closed is wrapped in much uncertainty. After devoting much thought to the subject I submit, and not without some diffidence, the following opinion :—

On the summit of Saints' Island may be seen the Lis or fort which we have already referred to as the site of the original cœnobium of St. Dabheoc. Immediately adjoining it, on its eastern side, is the cemetery, in the centre of which are the ruins of the mortuary crypt,* where the remains of St. Dabheoc and his successors were probably laid to rest. Following the authority of Henry of Saltrey, who said that the purgatorial cave was *in cœmeterio extra frontem ecclesiæ*, I felt inclined to regard this ruined oratory as the *Caverna Purgatorii*. On more mature reflection I prefer the opinion of the Ordnance Survey party, who were guided not only by the traditions of the locality, but also by ancient maps and references. They have set down upon their map the Church of the monastery on Saints' Island as "the Purgatory." To this day the inhabitants of the district maintain that the ancient cave was situated on the eastern side of Saints' Island, where stood the Church † of the medieval Monastery. Again, all the early accounts of the place concur in saying that the *Caverna Purgatorii* was strongly protected by a triple wall of enclosure, and watchfully secured by lock and key—the key being always in the custody of the Prior. Now, the buildings, marked "Purgatory" on the

* Its dimensions, so far as they can be traced, were between 18 and 20 feet in length, by about 12 feet in width.

† The Rev. Philip Skelton, whose account of St. Patrick's Purgatory was published in 1770, refers to this as a fact not called in question in his time. He says :—"In the largest of these, still called the Island of Saints, are the ruins of a small well-built chapel, at which the penances were some ages ago performed."

Ordnance map, stood within this strongly guarded rampart, the remains of which are yet distinctly visible.

It may well be asked—Why did the Augustinians substitute their church for the original purgatorial cave? We can only conjecture that motives of convenience influenced them in the change, and this in face of the difficulty of crossing and re-crossing the wide expanse of water separating Saints' Island from the *Caverna* on the lesser island, now called Station Island, then known as the "Island of the Purgatory." They substituted the monastery church for the Purgatorium, or established a *Caverna* hard-by, in which penances analogous to those authorised by ancient usage at the original cave were performed. This will supply at least a secondary reason why the Pope ordered the *Caverna* on Saints' Island to be closed, "because," to repeat the words of the Annals of Ulster, "it was not the cave shown by God to St. Patrick."

That the purgatorial cave existed originally on Station Island, same as at present, we regard as certain. In the first place the saints' cells or oratories on Station Island bear the clearest marks of a remote antiquity. Again, the words of the *Martyrology of Donegal* (edited by Drs. Todd and Reeves), p. 1, clearly prove that the original cave was situated where the station exercises are at present conducted, viz. on Station Island. It says:—"Dabheog of Loch Geirg in Ulster. At the eastern extremity of that lake are St. Patrick's Purgatory and Dabheog's Island; there is also a monastery in which there were Canons at the western extremity of the same lake, and from him is named Termon-Dabheog on both sides of the lake we have mentioned." Thence it is clear that the Purgatory was situated in the eastern portion of Lough Derg, where lies Station Island. The monastery of the Augustinian Canons stood, however, on Saints' Island, in the western division of the lake. Whilst round the entire ambit of the lake extended the termon-lands of the monastery. Further, we find, in the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis affirming that in his time the cave was on the lesser island. Other writers of that period repeat the

same statement. Peter Lombard, in the sixteenth century, speaks of this island as the "Insula Purgatorii." Cardinal Orsini gave it the name by which it was known in the Irish vernacular, "Oilean Phargadora S. Phadruig," *i.e.* the Island of St. Patrick's Purgatory.

Here in its gloomy cave St. Patrick fortified himself by rigid penance for the labours of his apostolate; hither St. Dabheoc repaired from his monastery on the larger, or Saints' Island, to practise solitary contemplation and mortification; and here so many early anchorets attained to a high degree of perfection.

As to the practice among the early Irish anchorets of dwelling in caves much might be written. Though prevalent in Ireland it was not peculiar to that country. Feijoo tells us, that as regards the retirement of St. Patrick into the cave in Ulster, and of so many fervent souls in imitation of him, there are several other similar examples in the Church. He instances the great St. Benedict in the cave of Sublacum, St. Dominic in that of Segovia, and St. Ignatius in that of Manresa.* And he adds:—"Perhaps God had shown a signal favour to the great St. Patrick, and to others who imitated him, by representing to him in that cave a vision of the pains of Purgatory, and of the joys of Paradise, and that, upon this foundation, the report became noised abroad, that all who enter the cave should share the same vision."

In the decree of Pope Alexander VI., we can observe the vigilant care with which the Church guards her holy

* A further instance in point is the cave of St. Baume, near Marseilles, where St. Mary Magdalene performed most austere penance. In our own day the cave, or grotto of the apparition at Lourdes furnishes a living example. The prototype for all being the cave or grotto at Bethlehem, where our Divine Lord first entered upon His mortal pilgrimage.

places against even the least infringement of established and authorised discipline. "Holy Church," says Balmez, "neither admits nor encourages, even by silence, anything contrary to truth, virtue, or piety." Hence, in the case of Lough Derg, she did not hesitate to interrupt that pilgrimage, until the irregularity, or infringement of discipline complained of, had been removed. The interval, during which the pilgrimage was forbidden, was but of short duration, and soon it entered on a new career, which has since happily continued with manifold spiritual advantage to the Irish race. In the long ordeal of persecution, to which the faithful Catholics of Ireland were subjected, many of the institutions of religion were ruined and laid desolate, while St. Patrick's Purgatory, like another ark of refuge, has always maintained its salutary influence, and safely passed through the deluge of tribulation to the more peaceful and tranquil days in which we live.

CHAPTER XI.

RE-OPENING OF THE PILGRIMAGE—THE ISLAND OF THE PURGATORY, OR STATION ISLAND—ITS JURISDICTION IN WHOM VESTED—THE COURSE OF PENANCE PERFORMED THERE IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

SOON after the Papal edict had been put in force at Lough Derg, the people again commenced to revisit it. It is even stated that George Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, who succeeded to the Metropolitan Chair in 1522, made a strong appeal to Rome in favour of its reopening, and that acting on his solicitation, the ruling Pontiff recalled the Bull of Alexander VI., and issued another, granting indulgences to the pilgrims, and certain privileges to the community in charge of the pilgrimage. Messingham in his *Florilegium* states, that on the nature of its devotions being explained to the Holy See, indulgences were attached to this pilgrimage before the close of the sixteenth century.

So soon after the closing of the cave as 1504, we find its Prior referred to in the following entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters*:—

"1504. Turlough Maguire, who had been Canon Chorister at Clogher, Pastor of Derryvallen, and Prior of Lough Derg, fell down a stone staircase at the town of Athboy, about the festival of St. Patrick, and died of the fall, and he was buried in the monastery of Cavan."*

* In 1480 this monastery of Cavan was also chosen as his burial place by his kinsman, Thomas Oge Maguire, an illustrious pilgrim.

The following entry taken from the same Annals will go to show that the edict had not continued in force for any great length of time; and that foreign pilgrims began to frequent it again as of old :—

"Anno 1516. A French knight came upon his pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory on Lough Gerg, and on his arrival, and at his departure he visited O'Donnell, from whom he received great honours, gifts, and presents; and they formed a great intimacy and friendship with each other, and the knight, upon hearing that the Castle of Sligo was defended against O'Donnell, promised to send him a ship with great guns."

One of the earliest notices of the Purgatory after its demolition in 1497 is to be found in the Memoirs of Sir James Melvil of Hall-Hill, who in his youth was sent by the Queen Mother of Scotland to France, to be brought up in the service of Mary, Queen of Scots. Melvil was in the suite of Jean de Monluc, bishop of Sens and French ambassador at the Scottish court, and as the latter had negotiations to conduct in Ireland, both repaired thither for that purpose. The ambassador's business, as Melvil tells us, was "to learn particularly the notions and likelihoods of the offers made by O'Neil, O'Donel, O'Docart, and Callock, who were willing to shake off the yoke of England and become subject to the King of France." The bishop and suite sailed from Dumbarton in January 1545, and arrived in Lough Foyle after a long and tempestuous voyage on Shrove Tuesday, and on the following day reached O'Doherty's house, 'a great dark tower.'" Melvil, who does not appear to have visited the Purgatory himself, tells us :—

"Now the ambassador met in a secret place with O'Neill, and his associates, and heard their offers and overtures. And the Patriarch of Ireland did meet him there, who was a Scotsman

born, named Wauchope, and was blind of both his eyes, and yet had been divers times at Rome by post. He did great honour to the ambassador, and conveyed him to see St. Patrick's Purgatory."

I shall here set forth in order extracts from works of the sixteenth century, in which the writers describe the Island of the Purgatory, or Station Island, and the purgatorial cave therein situated. And first of all the learned Jesuit, Father Campion, who writes thus in his *History of Ireland*, published about 1570 :—

"At the east end a door leadeth into a closet of stone, which they call the Purgatory, because devout people have resorted thither for penance, and reported at their return strange visions of pain and bliss appearing unto them. They used to continue therein four and twenty hours, which doing one while with ghostly meditations, and another while with a dreadful conscience of their deserts, they saw, as they say, a plain resembling of their own faults and virtues, with the honour and comfort thereto belonging, that one so terrible, the other so joyous, that they vainly deem themselves for the time to have sight of heaven and hell." A little further on he adds :—"Since writing hereof, I met with a priest, who told me that he had gone the same pilgrimage, and affirmed the order of premises; but that he, for his own part, saw no sight in the world, save only fearful dreams when he chanced to nod, and those, he said, were exceedingly horrible; further, he added, that the place seemed to him scarcely able to contain six persons."

Stanihurst writing in 1586 (*Vita S. Patricii*, Antwerp), says that "in the memory of man, the persons, who enter this purgatory, are sensible of no terrors unless they should happen to fall asleep. But," he continues, "in the first establishing of religion (at which time miracles are generally most frequent) it seems very likely that many strange

and terrible sights used to appear before the eyes of the penitents."

Messingham's *Florilegium*, published in 1587, has it :—

"Some are of opinion, that the cave, or pit, shown by Christ our Lord to St. Patrick, is either unknown or invisible, or, at least, is not that into which the pilgrims go, and are shut up for twenty-four hours; but either lies hid underneath, or a few paces from it. So according to ancient tradition have I been informed by the Reverend John Gaffney, abbot of Leathra; and John M'Kegan, a priest, a septuagenarian. Others consider that the place is altogether unknown, and will not be seen by man until the end of the world; like the sepulchre of Moses, and the Ark of the Covenant among the ancient Hebrews previous to their return from Babylon. And this last is the opinion of Father Eugene Duffey, a Franciscan, and a man of well-known piety, as I have been told by Torny Mulchonry, an aged antiquary. Whether Duffey, Gaffney, Conry, Kegan and others be correct in this relation, which, nevertheless, is not the opinion most generally received, I shall say nothing at present; but grave men consider that we ought not rashly to abandon the common belief that prevails among so many, namely, that the cave, covered in like a low vault, which is seen in the Island of Lough Derg, is the true site of the pit that we seek."

Messingham says that in the memory of people living even in his own time the cave had been filled up level with the adjoining surface; though at the first institution of the place it was deeper, and, according to the tradition of old people, the filling up was performed under the sanction of the bishop and of the Apostolic Chair.

The Most Rev. Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Armagh, who wrote his *Commentarius de Regno Hiberniæ* in the year 1600, about a hundred years after the edict of suppression, says that in his time the guardianship of the

Purgatory remained in the hands of the Augustinians, but the pilgrimage was conducted on Station Island. His words are:—

"On the other island" (Saints' Island) "is a convent of St. Augustine, subject to the abbot and monastery of SS. Peter and Paul, situated in the See of Armagh. Yet he, who on this lake is chief of the monks, is honoured with the title of Prior of the Purgatory. Two of these monks always reside in turn on the 'Island of the Purgatory,' to receive and instruct, as spiritual fathers, those pilgrims who come there to expiate their sins."

And speaking of the Island of the Purgatory, the present Station Island, Dr. Lombard writes:—

"In it are situated the following holy places, which are thus separate respectively from each other. In the first place, an elegant church surrounded by a cemetery, in which church, along with certain other relics of St. Patrick, is preserved in the wall the stone on which the Saint used to repose his head instead of a pillow. Secondly, a grotto a few paces to the north of the church, which is variously termed the Cave of the Purgatory, the Purgatory of St. Patrick, and even St. Patrick's Pit, which, though it is now almost on a level with the ground in its vicinity, was formerly of very great depth; but in the lapse of time and on different occasions, as tradition has it, both by the ordinance of successive bishops and with the approval of the Roman Pontiffs, it has thus become gradually raised to the surface of the earth about it. Its length, width, and height are such as to admit of twelve, or at most fourteen persons, arranged two and two in order, not standing erect, but profoundly inclined. Its walls and roof are of stone. At one side there is a small window, at which those bound to read the canonical hours are placed; and at its extreme end lies a stone, on which St. Patrick used to pray on bended knees, and which still retains the impression of his knees. This stone

covers the mouth of that dread abyss, which is said to have been formed at the prayers of the Saint. Thirdly, beyond this cave, and facing the north, are seven cells or stations, in memory of the more distinguished saints of Ireland, which cells are called *lecti pœnosi*. Fourthly, on the opposite side of the church, towards the west, stand some inns or cottages for the accommodation of the pilgrims." Dr. Lombard then proceeds to describe the penitential devotions of the pilgrimage, which substantially correspond with accounts given by later writers, hereafter to be noticed. His information regarding the place he received from persons who made the pilgrimage a few years previously. And he adds that the form of penance there observed was practised by such numbers that the English Deputy could neither prevent them, nor attempt to desecrate the place itself.

In this description, as given by Dr. Lombard, we have a fair outline of Station Island as it was about three hundred years ago. Allowing that the church of the pilgrims stood where St. Mary's Church now stands; that the cave was situated near the present campanile (and this is confirmed by the remains of a narrow building, corresponding with the dimensions of the cave, which may be seen at either side of the campanile, and which tradition points to as part of the cave), which would certainly be "a few paces to the north of the church;" that the penal beds held the same position they now occupy, "beyond the cave and facing the north;" that the inns or cottages stood where the presbytery, hospice, and row of lodging houses now stand, "on the opposite side of the church, towards the west;" we are thus enabled to identify Dr. Lombard's outline and references. What perplexes us most in his description is his reference to a cemetery, knowing as we do that the cemetery is situated on Saints' Island. Dr. Lombard, however, may have borrowed his phraseology from the situation of the

church and cave in former times on Saints' Island, and to have drawn, in this instance, on the language of Henry of Saltrey, who describes the cave as being in *cœmeterio extra frontem ecclesiæ*. Besides, it is worthy of note, that in opening the foundation of St. Mary's new Church in 1870, human bones, some of which I have seen on the island, were discovered. Those remains, which were in a remarkable state of preservation, would go to sustain the statement made by Dr. Lombard that the church on Station Island had in his time a cemetery attached to it. I may add, that in Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland*, there is a map on which this cemetery is marked. And in other maps of the island taken in the seventeenth century I have noticed a similar reference to a cemetery.

The topography of the Island of the Purgatory during the early part of the seventeenth century is also pretty accurately given in Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland* (London, 1654), where we find a description of it, together with a map of the island on which the pilgrimage was then conducted. The island marked in Ware's map must be Station Island, for he describes its extent as three-quarters of an acre, whereas Saints' Island is fully twelve times as large. The island so represented is somewhat circular in form, whilst we know that at present it is an oblong strip of rock; but the change in its form may be accounted for by the action of the waves, making indentations and gradually wearing away the rock on its eastern and western sides. Ware thus describes the island, the church, the cave, and the circles, or "beds":—

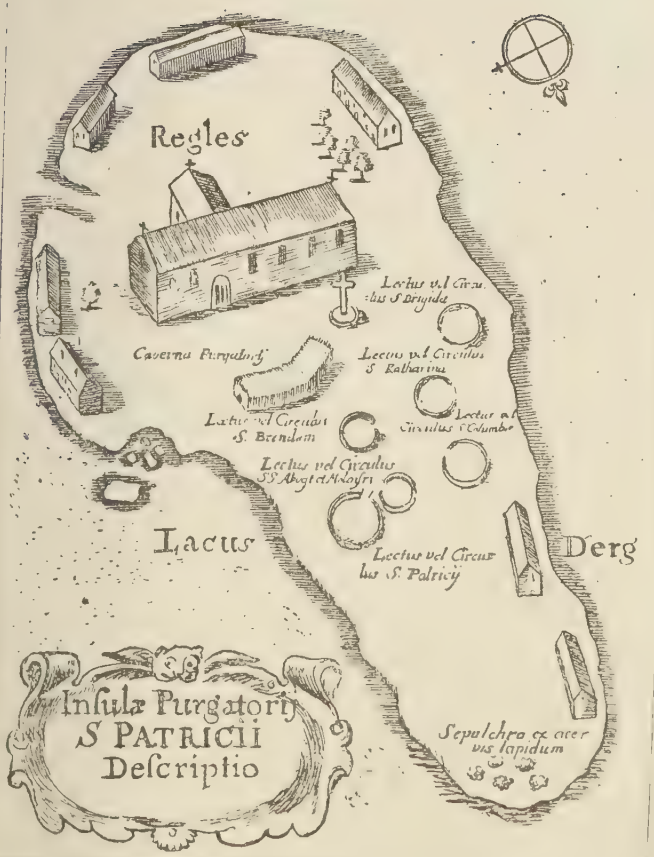
"It is to be noted that the circles, commonly called 'beds,' enclosed with stone walls scarce three feet high, were the places where the pilgrims performed their penance. As to the cave

itself, it was built of freestone, and covered with broad flags, and green turf laid over them. The door being shut, there is no light but what enters at a little window in the corner. It is in length, within the walls, sixteen feet and a half, and in breadth two feet one inch. And as the cave itself is small, so likewise is the island, which is scarce three-quarters of an Irish acre. The church of the island was heretofore called *Regles*,* whether so from the relics there preserved, or because inhabited by Regular Canons, let others inquire."

On Sir James Ware's map are marked the Regles, or Church—a cruciform building, the exact model, and on the site, of the old St. Mary's Church; St. Patrick's Cross, a little to the north of it, about twenty-five paces south of its present site; the Caverna, near it to the left, where the present campanile stands; *circulus vel lectus S. Brigidæ, lectus S. Catherinæ, S. Columbæ, S. Brendani, lectulus S. Abogi et Molasri et Sti. Patricii;* and there are also seven little booths, or lodging-houses represented round the margin of the island.

It would appear that the place of pilgrimage on Lough Derg, although territorially surrounded by the parish of Templecarne, formed in itself a distinct and separate jurisdiction from a very remote period. Originally, indeed, the community at Lough Derg may have ministered to the spiritual wants of the district known as Termon MacGrath; but in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, a parish church was erected at Templecarne, and a pastor, it may be supposed, was placed in charge of the benefice, thus leaving the monks undivided charge of the monastery and of the pilgrimage. That this conjecture is well

* According to Petrie, *Regles* means an abbey church, *Teampull* means any church, whether belonging to secular or regular clergy. A church erected by St. Columbkille at Derry was known as the *duibh-Regles*.



WARE'S MAP OF STATION ISLAND, LOUGH DERG, 1705.

founded would appear from the fact, that in 1504 Turlough Maguire, who was Prior of Lough Derg, was then pastor of *Derryvallen*, which clearly suggests that the priorate of Lough Derg and the pastorate of Templecarne, or Termon MacGrath, were two distinct offices and jurisdictions. Again, it is stated in the *Memoir of Most Rev. Peter Lombard*, by Cardinal Moran, that Hugh O'Neil, Earl of Tyrone, claimed and obtained from the Holy Father, in the year 1609, the restoration of the right of appointment to certain benefices, in the list of which Termon MacGrath is included. It is more than unlikely, however, that the right of nominating the Prior of Lough Derg was included in that concession ; whence it would follow that Lough Derg was then as now a separate jurisdiction. Nor can I find any record in ancient or modern times of any pastor of Templecarne having been Prior of Lough Derg, or of having exercised any parochial jurisdiction there ; or of anyone having exercised spiritual jurisdiction there, except under the sanction and delegation of the bishop of the diocese.* The Augustinian Canons conducted the pilgrimage till their expulsion in 1632. Next, Franciscan Friars had charge of it till towards the close of the last century, when the Bishop of Clogher (in which diocese Lough Derg lies,) appointed one of the secular priests of his diocese to officiate as prior. Since that time a prior and assistant confessors for the pilgrims are annually appointed by the bishop of the

* The only exception I can find of a parish priest of Templecarne having been also Prior of Lough Derg, is that given by the Rev. Mr. Hewson, who visited the island in the beginning of August, 1701. He states : —"On the ninth day (about two in the morning), the titular priest of the parish (whom they call prior) puts them into the caves, one of which holds thirty, another sixteen, and another fourteen persons, the men and women separately."

diocese. And it is but just to add, that, under the paternal care of the bishop and clergy of Clogher, Lough Derg has flourished as a pilgrimage, maintained its hold on the affections of the faithful, braved triumphantly many obstacles and enemies, and, after centuries of persecution, still continues to be the proudest heritage of Ireland's faith and piety.

That Lough Derg was visited by great numbers of pilgrims during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is put beyond doubt by the testimony of the Bollandists (March 17. p. 590), who say that in the sixteenth century it was visited by 1,500 pilgrims at the same time; and Archbishop Fleming, of Dublin, tells us that in 1625 many had to return without finding room to land on the island. I here insert the account of this pilgrimage, written by Dr. Fleming to the Internuncio at Brussels, on the 20th of August, 1625, from which we may infer what the course of penance at this pilgrimage then was:—

"The pious and innumerable pilgrimages of the faithful this year are a pledge of great fervour; for, like bees to the beehive, there daily flock such numbers from every corner of the kingdom, for penitential purposes, to a certain island, which is called the Purgatory of St. Patrick, and which is situated in the centre of a lake, that many have been obliged to return without satisfying their pious desire, there being no room for landing on the island. This pilgrimage, though, through the bitter persecutions of heresy, it has been almost abandoned for many years, was once so celebrated throughout the Christian world, that many from most distant parts even of the Continent visited it in a spirit of devotion. The manner of performing the pilgrimage, as it is now observed from ancient tradition, is as follows:—Each person, from the day he arrives on the island till the tenth following day, never departs from it. All this time is, without intermission, devoted to fasting, watching, and

prayer. If they wish to give rest to their body they must sleep on the bare ground, and for the most part under the broad canopy of heaven. They receive but one refection, and that consists of bread and water. It is incredible what severe austerities and bodily mortifications females, as well as men, and persons of every age and condition, endure whilst they perform this penitential course. During twenty-four hours they are shut up in certain caves, like unto prisons, where they pass the whole day and night, entirely absorbed in prayer, and receiving nothing to eat or to drink.

"I have thought it well to mention this fact, for I am sure your Excellency will be rejoiced to see that the natives of this island, by this so great and so unparalleled an impetus of devotion, seek to appease the anger of God; and we may confidently hope that by their fervour He will be appeased, Who listens to the prayers of those who have recourse to Him in their afflictions."

The contemporary writer, Messingham (p. 95), describes the course of penance, as then performed on Lough Derg, more in detail:—

"During the nine days of the pilgrimage," he says, "a rigorous fast was observed on oaten bread and the water of the lake. The pilgrim was first conducted barefoot to the Church of St. Patrick, around which he moved on his knees, seven times inside and seven times outside, repeating all the while stated prayers of the Church. He was then conducted to seven places, or stations, known as *lecti panosi*, which were formerly small churches, or sanctuaries, dedicated to various saints; and at each of these he repeated the visit as above. The next station was around a cross in the cemetery, and subsequently at another cross that was fixed in a mound of stones. Thence he proceeded, over a rough and rocky path, to a spot on the border of the lake, to which tradition pointed as the place on which St. Patrick had knelt in prayer. Here also certain prayers were appointed to be recited. All this pilgrimage and prayer was

repeated three times each day—morning, noon, and evening—during the first seven days; on the eighth day it was repeated six times; confession and communion followed on the morning of the ninth day; and then the pilgrims entered the cave, where twenty-four hours were devoted to fasting and meditation. Any that chose not to enter the cave passed these twenty-four hours in solitude at one of the former stations."

Carve states that, besides their fasting, watching, and other bodily austerities, the pilgrims offered prayers to God for the general welfare of the Church, and for the preservation of true peace and concord amongst all Christians.

But the darkest day in the history of Lough Derg is drawing near, when the Calvinists, under Government orders, desecrated and demolished this sanctuary, on which Primate Lombard bestowed the distinguished title of being "the most celebrated and holy place in Ireland;" when the apostate English determined to destroy that shrine of religion, where their forefathers in the Ages of Faith had done penance, where King Alfred of Northumbria had prayed to St. Patrick before his return to England from the schools of Mayo and Lisgoole, and where Harold, afterwards King of England (not to speak of many other princes and nobles of that country, who had done likewise), made pilgrimage, about the year 1050, to the "miraculous cave of St. Patrick." Of the doom which awaited Lough Derg at the hands of the Calvinists, let the following chapter bear evidence.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MAGRATHS OF TERMON-MAGRATH—ANIMOSITY OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE PILGRIMAGE—THE AUGUSTINIAN CANONS EXPELLED—RUINS ON SAINTS' ISLAND AND DESCRIPTIVE PARTICULARS OF THE SAME.

E have seen in the previous chapter how pilgrims in vast numbers had flocked to St. Patrick's Purgatory during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth so great was the concourse of pilgrims that the place became an object of jealousy to the Government; but it was not until a later reign that the impious behests of its enemies were put into operation.

For a considerable period anterior to the time at which we have arrived, the Magraths of Termon-Dabheoc were the hereditary termoners, or *Erenachs* of the lands assigned by pious ancestors as the patrimony of this island hermitage. From them the district derived the name of Termon-Magrath, which by this time had superseded its former designation. Their family residence was a strong keep or castle, known as the castle of Termon-Magrath, the ruins of which form a striking feature near the shoreline of Lough Erne, about a mile from the village of Pettigo, and some distance to the left of the line of railway as you proceed from Pettigo to Bundoran. At this castle the county of Donegal abuts upon Lough Erne for the very limited distance intervening between the

Termon River and Waterfoot. Here the soil is fertile; and what with wooded shores, extensive stretch of the lake, with Boa Island in the offing like an immense breakwater, and the Fermanagh and Leitrim mountains in the background, the visitor to this fascinating scene will not easily forget its undoubted charms.

The tradition still survives that this castle was erected by the famous Miler Magrath, eldest son of Donogh,* otherwise Gillamagna Magrath, of Termon-Magrath, of which territory his predecessors had been hereditary guardians. If built by Miler, it must have been before his apostasy, which took place at Drogheda on the 31st May, 1567. During the space of four or five months only did he enjoy the temporalities of the See of Clogher as its first Protestant bishop† prior to his appointment to the See of Cashel.

From an Inquisition taken at Donegal on 26th Novem-

* In the 38th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, A.D. 1596, Donogh Magrath, chieftain of Termon-Magrath, and Milerius, his eldest son, surrendered to the Queen the lands of Termon-Magrath and Termonamongan, for the purpose of reducing the lands to English tenure, and with intent that they should be regranted to Donogh for life, with remainder to Milerius for life, with remainder to his several sons; and in the same year the said lands were so granted.

In 1610, 22nd December, the site, etc., of the late Priory, Monastery or Friary of Canons of Lough Derg, with the lands of Termon-Magrath and Termonamongan, were granted in fee to James Magrath, son of Archbishop Myler, subject to a chief rent of £10. This grant is to be found in the Patent Rolls of James I., p. 187, and is copied into Hill's "Plantation of Ulster." The name of James Magrath occurs in most of the State documents of that period relating to Lough Derg.

† That this unhappy man retracted his errors and died reconciled to the Catholic Church is shown by the Rev. M. J. Brenan in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, p. 409. During his ill-fated career temporal favours and emoluments were lavished upon him in return for his apostasy.

ber, 1603, in the first year of the reign of James I., and copied by O'Donovan into his *Donegal Letters*, it would appear that the Augustinians were driven from Lough Derg, and their church and monastery pulled down even before the year 1632. The document in question runs thus:—

"In the parts of Ulster, near the territory called O'Donnell's countrie, are the walls and monuments of a certain monastery, or priory, late house of the Canonical Friars, called the Priory of Lochdarge, alias commonly called St. Patrick's Purgatory, which priory now is very much on the decay, and has these many years past been totally abandoned and dissolved. The aforesaid priory lies and is situate in a certain small island in the middle of a lake, called Lochdarge, about fifteen miles from the village of Donnagall aforesaid. The prior of the monastery aforesaid, at the time of the dissolution and abandoning aforesaid, was seized as of fee, in right of the priory aforesaid, of the site, circuit, ambit, and precinct of the said late house, with the appurtenances, in which are an old church very ruinous, and walls of stone lately levelled, with small piece of land circumjacent, containing one and a half acres of land; and of the whole island aforesaid, containing about ten acres; and of certain lands and hereditaments to the said house and island adjacent, called Termon-Magrath and Termon-M'Monghan, containing four quarters of the great measure."

That the absence of the Augustinians was but temporary, and consequent upon the persecution setting in against this stronghold of Catholic piety, we may infer from the testimony of Dr. Lombard, already quoted, as also from the report of Sir William Stewart, who found there, in 1632, an abbot and forty friars. From the foregoing document we can easily understand how the English garrison in Ireland, well aware of the King's hostility to the Catholic religion, testified their zeal for the work of

the Reformation by speedily visiting with destruction this religious institution.

We have already seen how the poets and romance-writers of the middle ages surrounded the narrative of St. Patrick's Purgatory with imaginative and legendary embellishments, which constituted much of the sensational literature of that period. In those legends the readers were conducted in imagination, not only to the regions of purgatory, but in turn, likewise, to the infernal abyss and to the abode of the blessed. At the outbreak of the Reformation Protestant writers seized with avidity upon those legends, as if they were matters of faith,* and turned them into ridicule against the practices of the Catholic Church. They even went so far as to assert, that Catholics believed there was a passage from this island to the realms of purgatory. In this way did the coming storm gather in intensity, until it burst in full force upon the island, scattering the monks, demolishing its religious edifices, and reducing the place to utter ruin. Early in the reign of James I., its churches and oratories were pulled down. But, despite those efforts to put a stop to the pilgrimage, the faithful still flocked to it in great numbers, which so enraged the minions of the Government, that the Lords Justices then governing Ireland, with the

* Regarding the medieval tales related of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and so eagerly seized upon by Protestant writers to justify their attack upon this venerable retreat, the following extract from Frederic Ozanam's *Des Sources Poetiques de la Divine Comedie*, must prove interesting: Referring to the perspicacity and erudition of Mr. Wright's work on St. Patrick's Purgatory, he adds:—"But why should we import the bitterness of Protestant controversy, and of English hatred against Ireland, into the study of a harmless tradition, which was never other than a poetical tale, which never entered into the domain of the theological dogmas of the Church, and which the Pope would not permit to be inserted in the Roman Breviary?"

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advice of the Privy Council, issued an order in May, 1632,* to Lord Balfour, Sir William Stewart and others, requiring them to seize the Purgatory of St. Patrick for his Majesty's use, and to make fast the doors and entrances of the same, so as to do away with the continuance of the pilgrimage; and the following reply to that order was sent by Sir William Stewart on 8th of June, 1632 :—

"To the Right Honorable Adam Lord Viscount of Ely, Lord Chancellor, and Richard Earl of Corke, Lords Justices of this kingdom, and to the Lords and others of his Majestie's Honorable Privie Councell.

"Right Honorable,

"I have received the copy of a letter sent by my Lord Balfoure, directed to his Lordship, myselfe and others, for seizing unto his Majesty's use St. Patrick's Purgatory, and his Lordship appointed me to meete him near the Lough the fifth day of this month, whither I accordingly came, and staid in the comfortlesse place almost two dayes and one night, none coming. And then I got intelligence that the abbots, priests, and fryars, which were in the island, had gotten knowledge of your Lordship's directions; whereupon in the night time they stole out of the island in a boat, which at the least would carry forty persons. Whereupon I sent to search for the said boat, which was found and brought unto me. And perceiving that none of the rest mentioned in your Lordship's letters were likely to come, I being confident that you would take it in good part, that I should rather upon such occasion vary from your direction than leave your intentions unperformed, I caused to land some men upon a little island, where Fryars doe inhabit, near unto the other island, which is called St. Patrick's

* The author of the *Monasticon Hibernicum* states that it was in the year 1630 the Government of Ireland decided on having it finally suppressed, and he adds—"It was accordingly dug up, to the no small distress and loss of the Roman Catholic clergy."

Purgatory, where I found foure hundred and seventy-one persons doing such fooleries (*sic*) as is not to be imagined could be done among Christians, a taste whereof your Lordship may perceive by this inclosed description. All the aforesaid number of persons I have caused to be put safe to shore, which was done without any kind of violence. For, seeing the Priests and Fryars had left the island, and carried with them all manner of provisions and goods that therein was, the people were willing and desirous to be drawn on shore. The which being done, I did cause the Boate, which was the safeguard of the Island, to be drawne on shore, and delivered the same unto the friends and servants of one Master Magrath, unto whom the Boate, Island and Countrie doe belong, and told him that it was your Lordship's directions that the same should not be meddled withall, nor the Island any more frequented until his Majestie's pleasure were fully knowne, and that your Lordship would signify the same at large. All things being thus fairly done, I hope your Lordship will not dislike that I adventured myself alone to do that which was trusted unto me and others. And I am well assured that if I had slipt that occasion, your intentions should not have been executed. So humbly desiring to be excused for what is done amisse, I take leave and will ever remaine

Your Lordship's ready and humble servant,

WILLIAM STEWART."

A vivid tradition still survives, gleaned from some of the old residents at Lough Derg, and which they in turn received from their predecessors, in which the expulsion of the Augustinian monks is thus circumstantially told. The very day before the Government orders were carried out at Lough Derg, a messenger came from Donegal to forewarn the monks of their impending fate. He communicated to them what he overheard among the military at Donegal, and besought them to escape in time, and thus save themselves from their enemies. The monks,

however, determined to remain at their post, and calmly to await the consequences. In the meantime, familiar as they now were with such hostile visitations, they made ready for the worst, having first secreted in a safe hiding-place in the ground the more cumbrous articles of value, reserving for removal only such articles as they might bring with them without attracting the notice of the greedy soldiery. At length, after a night of sorrow and suspense, the morning of their expulsion dawned; and as the day advanced, a company of cavalry from Donegal was descried proceeding over the mountains, and advancing quickly towards the lake. In the most summary way they ordered the venerable abbot and his community, which consisted of forty monks—"all fine, able men" (as my informant interposed), to take their departure. A detachment of soldiers was directed to escort the monks as far as Portcreevy Bay, to make sure of their departure, and to prevent them from being eye-witnesses of the ruthless destruction about to befal their consecrated abode. The afflicted monks, having taken their last farewell of Lough Derg, proceeded, we may suppose, to Devenish, Lisgoole, and Clones, where flourished houses of their order, and where stood guest-houses or hospices, which for centuries were largely occupied by Lough Derg pilgrims.

As the "Abuse of Pilgrimage" (to use the phrase of the persecuting Government of that time,) still continued to flourish, the Lords Justices issued more stringent orders, on the 13th September of the same year, to have it completely destroyed:—

"By the Lords Justices and Councell.

"Adam Loftus Canc. R. Corke.

"Forasmuch as the frequent and publick resort of people in

great numbers to that place or island called St. Patrick's Purgatory, there performing superstitious ceremonies, pilgrimages and offerings, is so extremely abusive and superstitious as is not fit to be endured, We therefore taking the same into our due consideration and foreseeing that albeit there may be a seeming cessation there for a time from those abuses and superstitions, in regard they observe the State to resent the same: Yet many times the seduced people will secretly finde opportunitie to resort thither, and so by stealth continue those superstitious abuses, while the place standeth as it now doth. We have therefore adjudged the best and fittest means to prevent and wholly take away the continuance of that abuse hereafter, that the place be defaced and utterly demolished. And, therefore, we doe hereby order and resolve that letters shall be despatched from this Board unto the Rev. Father in God, the Lord Bishop of Clogher, Sir John Dunbarre, High Sheriffe of the Countie of Fermanagh, Edward Tarleton, Esq., High Sheriffe of the Co. Donegal, Edward Archdale and Leonard Blennerhasset, Esqrs., Archibald Areskon, Clearke, or any three or more of them, whereof the said Lord Bishop, or Sir John Dunbarre or Edward Tarleton, to be always one. Requiring and authorizing them or any three or more of them as aforesaid, by or before the 3rd day of December next, to cause the chappell and all the Irish houses now scituate in that island, which is called St. Patrick's Purgatory, all the buildings, pavements, walls, works, foundations, circles, caves, cels, and vaults thereof, of lime or stone or otherwise to be broken down, defaced and utterly abolished. And that also called St. Patrick's Bed, as also that rocke or stone standing in the water there having a cleft in it, which (as is vainly said) St. Patricke made kneeling at his prayers; and also that stone covered there with water which hath the print of a man's foot, and which (as the seduced people do believe) St. Patricke made with standing thereon; and likewise all other things there whereunto those superstitious people have used to go in pilgrimage. And that they cause all the stones

to be thrown into the Lough or water wherein the island standeth, saveth only such of the stones of the said chappelle as James Magrath, Esquier, the proprietor of the land, will forthwith carry cleare out of the island, and make use of in some other place. We do also order that the said James Magrath shall forthwith enter into bond to the Clerk of the Councell for his Majestie's use in the summe of one thousand pounds English, with condition to beare all the charges necessary for the performing of all that by this order is required to be done, and to be personally present at the seeing of it done, and not to suffer any interruption or impediment to be given thereunto. And that such of the stones of the Chappelle as said James Magrath shall carry out, shall not at any time hereafter during his life be returned to that island. And that he shall from time to time take order that no person or persons be admitted at any time hereafter during his life with his permission or knowledge, or privily to go into that place or island called St. Patrick's Purgatory, to the end to say Masse there, or to perform any pilgrimage, offerings, or any other superstitious ceremonies there. And that he shall suffer no Boate to be kept there to pass to or from the said island. And that during his life there shall not be any conventions there of Jesuits, Fryars, Priests, Nuns, or any other superstitious orders of the Popish pretended Cleargie that the said James Magrath shall be able to prevent: which bond being so entered into, the Sargeant at Arms, in whose custodie the said Magrath now remayneth, is upon Certificate hereof from the Clerke of the Councell to release said Magrath, he paying his fees. For which a copy of this order, attested by the Clerke of the Councell, shall be his Warrant, Dated 13th of September, 1632.

"Charles Wilmott, Thom. Baltinglasse, Robert Ranelagh, Wm. Parsons, John King, Thom. Rotheram."

In the light of the freedom now enjoyed by Irish Catholics in their religious practices, we may well stand aghast at the persecuting spirit disclosed in the foregoing

"Order of Council," an ukase which for malignity might tax the ingenuity of a Nero or a Caligula. It is a sad reflection that the chief agents in the assault upon this cherished institution were the Protestant Archbishops of Dublin and Armagh, Adam Loftus and the learned Usher, and their but too obsequious instrument, Spottiswoode, third Protestant bishop of Clogher. Dr. James Spottiswoode, in the following letter addressed to Dr. Usher, tells how the foregoing "Order of Councell" was executed:—

"Most Rev. and Most Hon. Lord.

"Your Grace like enough may be desirous to know what is done touching the demolition of St. Patrick's Purgatory, required by the Lords Justices and Councell to be done by me and some other joynt Commissioners with me. May it please your Grace then, the next day after I took my leave of yourself at Armagh, I sent the coppy of the Lords Justices and Councell's letter, with the Order and Commission to everyone of my fellow Commissioners, and appointed our Rendevouze at the towne* next Lough Derge, the 25th of this instant October. From them I received answer, that they might well come alone, but could get none to accompany them, or any labourers or tooles upon any tearmes; and that a hundred men were not able to execute the Commission in a fortnight: notwithstanding whereof, I required them again to keep the day, and assured them, however, that I myselfe would be present; and accordingly I came to the place appointed the 24th day, with some twenty able men in my company well armed, and brought with us all sorts of tooles fitting for the service.

"If I had not come so appointed, we had returned without effecting anything; for the High Sheriffe of Donnegall came

* The town referred to must have been Pettigo, or as it was then called Cowlenver, to hold a fair in which licence was given to James Magrath on 22nd December, 1610.

not at the day, the High Sheriffe of Farmanagh, on the other side, came no better appointed than the one serving man, and showed himselfe altogether unwilling, and refused to enter the island. I had many discouragements myselfe. For, first, I was forced on a rainy day on a bleake place without any shelter to horse or man there hours before we could have the Boate. The winde in the meantime did rise, and there was none could take in hand to guide the Boate through dangerous rockes lying between the maine and the island. Again we were certified that we might be hardly put to it for fault of victualls, if we tooke them not in with ourselves; for the windes would sometimes blow ten days together so strong that no Boate would venture out or in: Nothwithstanding all which discouragements, I adventured to go in without victualls and stayed in the island till the service was done.

"The first thing I searched diligently after was the caves, wherein I remembered your Grace enjoyned me to digge to the very foundations, and leave no corner unsought, and so I did; I caused to digge about it on all sides, till I came to the Rocke, but I found no appearance of any secret passage, either to the Chappell or to the Lough; neither would the nature of the ground suffer it; in a word, the cave was a poor beggarly hole, made with some stones, layd together with men's hands without any great art; and after covered with earth, such as husbandmen make to keep a few hogs from the raine.

"When I could find nothing there, I undermined the Chappell, which was well covered with shingles, and brought all down together. Then we broke down the Circles and Saints' Beds, which were like so many coal pits, and so pulled down some great Irish houses. Thus, when I had defaced all, saving one Irish house, I came out of the island myself, and left one half of my men to pull that down also as soon as they should see me landed, not sooner; lest if by a storm we were driven back, we might want a place to shelter us.

"The Countrie people expected that St. Patricke would have wrought some miracles; but thanks be to God none of

my company received any other harme than the bad wayes, broken cawsies, and the dangers going in a little Boate: Yet one comfort is, we effected that for which we came hither, which was more than was expected could be done in so short a time, which hath wonderfully displeased them who were bewitched with these fooleries. But that I do not stand much upon, in regard I have obeyed the command of the State, and punctually, also, done what your Grace did enjoyne, whose directions I shall be ever ready to followe, and shall ever remaine

Your Grace's most affectionate in all duty,

JAMES* CLOGHER."

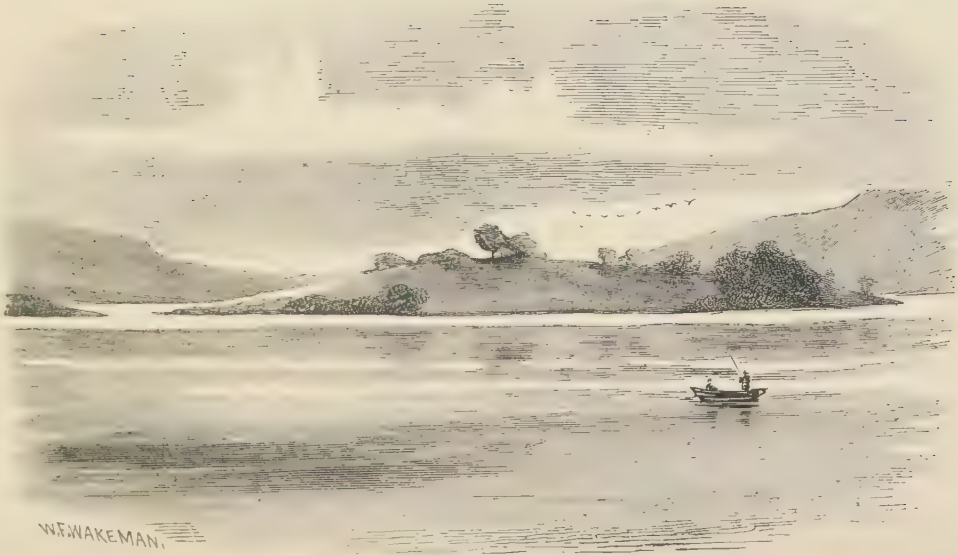
"Clogher, October 31st, Anno 1632."

But midst weal and woe the Irish heart had lovingly entwined itself round this island sanctuary. And though the Augustinian Canons† were no more to return to Saints' Island,‡ a place of residence for the officiating

* How strikingly in contrast with the zealots of a sterner age are not the Protestant dignitaries of our own time, some of whom, especially such lights as Drs. Reeves and Graves, have made valuable contributions to Irish antiquarian and ecclesiastical literature?

† That the Augustinians held some connection with Lough Derg as late as 1660 would appear from a list of those who assisted at a Synod of the ecclesiastical province of Armagh, held at Killoe, diocese of Ardagh, 8th October, 1660, and amongst others the following:—"The Prior of St. Patrick" (*i.e.* St. Patrick's Purgatory) "of the Canons Regular, the Prior of Devenish of Canons Regular, the procurator of the Abbot of Clones of the Canons Regular." *Vide* that repertory of historical documents, Cardinal Moran's *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, Vol. II., p. 196.

‡ On the 6-in. Ordnance Survey Map of the territory of Termon-Dabheoc, some two or three miles in a south-western direction from Lough Derg a place named "Bohogue-na-Canon" is marked. Here some of the Augustinians, expelled from Saints' Island, may have tarried for a time and erected there a little oratory for the celebration of the divine mysteries, awaiting an opportunity (not to be realised.) of returning to their ruined abode on Saints' Island.



Saints' Island, Lough Derg.

priests was erected on Station Island; the ruined churches and oratories were again put in some sort of repair; and the pilgrimage was resumed with renewed ardour.

Already have we given our opinion upon the *locale* of St. Dabheoc's early monastic establishment on Saints' Island. We have also supplied documentary evidence of the medieval monastery that flourished there for centuries under the rule of Canons Regular of St. Augustine. Before quitting that hallowed and historic spot it may interest many if we venture to trace in outline the ruins on Saints' Island, as they appear at the present day; and thus enable, so far as we can, the pilgrim and tourist to identify the various remains, and the purposes to which they were devoted. The accompanying sketch of Saints' Island, taken by Mr. Wakeman on 4th September, 1877, will forcibly convey how complete was the work of the destroyer, as not even ruins are visible on it. To obtain a favourable point of view, the artist, in company with the Prior of Lough Derg and the present writer, rowed out some distance from the eastern shore of Saints' Island, and in the direction of Station Island. Here in the background, on one side, appeared Meenanellison, which signifies the *Mountain Meadow of the little fort* (the little fort can be seen there); and on the other, or northern side, Croagh-Breac, *i.e. the speckled stack, or conical mountain*, which takes its name from numerous gray crags here and there jutting out from among the heather, and imparting to it a sort of speckled appearance.

On the southern shore of Saints' Island the stone piers, on which rested a bridge of beams, is still to be seen. Between those piers runs a channel about twenty yards wide, and from twenty to thirty feet deep, through which flows a strong current from the upper lake. It is said that a tidal ebb and flow are here occasionally per-

ceptible. Not many years ago a boatman descried, some distance from those piers, two fir spars with iron cranks attached, the inference being that they formed part of the old bridge, and were carried down the stream by the current. Convenient to this bridge, on the mainland, and at the very shore, are visible the foundations of an old building, its enclosure being completely filled up with the fallen walls. Tradition points it out as the ferry-house of Teague O'Doherty * whose name yet lives in the folk-lore of the locality.

As you ascend the ridge of Saints' Island, proceeding from the ancient bridge, the first object that attracts attention, on the very summit of the island, is the ⅂ıρ, already referred to as the site of St. Dabheoc's monastery. Immediately adjoining it, on its eastern side, is the cemetery, which is square-shaped, and enclosed by a strong wall, portions of which still remain, but in a ruinous condition. The cemetery measures thirty-five yards in length by twenty-seven in width. In its centre may be noticed the dilapidated remains of an old structure, which may have been the crypt, or mortuary chapel, raised over the grave of St. Dabheoc and his saintly successors. It measures 18 or 19 feet by 12. Twelve feet west of this structure lies a heap of stones, which formed, perhaps, the *situs* of St. Dabheoc's Cross, the head of which is preserved on Station Island, and which has been described when treating of St. Dabheoc. Ad-

* It is said that Teague subsequently had charge of the ferry between Portercevy and Station Island. Remains of the boat-quay at Portercevy are still visible, where a goodly sprinkling of oak, ash and sycamore trees lends a sylvan charm to this once frequented, but long forsaken harbour. For four or five generations O'Dohertys lived on the slopes of Augh-Keen mountain ; but they are now extinct in the locality.

joining, on its northern side, what we regard as the Oratory of St. Dabheoc, a large flagstone covers what is traditionally pointed to as the grave of a Prior. Some eighteen feet to the east of the cemetery will be seen the strong earthen fence running right across the island, and enclosing, in the shape of a segment of a circle, a space of ground about one acre and a half in extent, within which area stood the church and the monastery. The church stood about fifty paces to the east of the cemetery, and portions of its walls are still standing. From the church to the cemetery led a passage, about five feet wide, bounded by a wall at either side. That this passage had a vaulted roof we may safely conjecture.

The strong earthen fence we have already pointed to as intersecting the eastern extremity of the island measures 190 yards. On its northern slope it curves towards the east; and at either extremity of it, at the water's edge, a safe landing-place for a boat may be found. Remains of a double landing stage, or quay, are visible at the southern extremity of the fence. From this spot, we may hazard the opinion, the pilgrims set sail for the Island of the Purgatory, or Station Island, after having visited the monastery on Saints' Island. Thence, also, put forth the boat conveying the monks, who in their turn resided upon Station Island for the service of the Purgatory. Here, too, landed the visitors to the monastery, after the bridge above referred to had been broken down; although popular story has it that after the bridge failed, the ferry-boat was towed across from pier to pier by means of chains or ropes. From the boat-quay there leads an avenue as wide as an ordinary road to the ridge of the island, to the entrance of the sacred enclosures, so watchfully guarded, lest anyone, perchance, without the needful licence might venture to intrude. The strong earthen fence, already

described, bounds this avenue on the left, and on the right it is bounded by another earthen fence.

Within the enclosure are the remains of the church. The walls yet standing are but two or three feet high, and it measures thirty-six feet in length by twenty-six in width. Immediately adjoining the church, and encompassed by a dilapidated wall, we find an area, hexagonal in form, measuring sixty-six yards around. Behind this latter enclosure a hollow space may be observed, and though almost level with the surface, it is seldom to be seen without water. Tradition states that this was the Pilgrims' Well,* and that here they used to perform their ablutions before taking their departure from Saints' Island.

From the point of intersection, where the enclosing rampart crosses the pathway leading from the church to the cemetery, to the eastern extremity of the island, the distance measures ninety yards. At this eastern extremity were three walls of enclosure, as their remains sufficiently indicate, one on the brow of the island, the second round the margin of the shore, and the third about twelve feet farther out in the shallow water. The monastery stood at the eastern extremity of the island. Here all is ruin.

* Over this Well an aged thorn, its stem and branches overgrown with moss, and hoary with the rime of age, keeps guard and vigil. Its venerable aspect and position remind us of the appropriate lines, taken from the "Legend of Lough Erne," in Hayes' *Ballads of Ireland*, Vol. II., p. 215:—

> "And who can tell that hawthorn's age?
> A fairy charm preserved the tree!
> Beneath its bending branches lay
> Deep, clear and still, a crystal well,
> Where monks would oft their *Aves* say,
> And pilgrims would their Rosaries tell."

and nothing remains to enable us to trace the style or extent of the building. Trees and bushes find here a fertile soil in which to take root, and a dense cluster of them enshrouds the remains of this once flourishing monastery. Rabbits also find no difficulty in burrowing through the *debris*, thus adding to the ruin already existing. People of the locality relate how treasure-seekers dug up the ruins at this spot, as it was supposed the monks had there secreted their valuables before quitting the island. The story may have had its origin in the search for the ancient Purgatorium, made here by a certain Frenchman, of whom more hereafter. It is said the monastery was connected with the church by a vaulted passage or cloister. Among the heaps of rubbish in this spot may be seen some freestone quoins, door-blocks and flagstones, well dressed and chiselled. It is said that many of the ornamental cut-stones * on Saints' Island were carried off, and converted by farmers in the neighbourhood to such ignoble purposes as doorsteps, window-sills, etc., and even used in the doors and windows of their out-offices.

Just beside the ruins of the monastery, on the slope fronting Station Island, and on the edge of the lake, are the remains of a building, twenty-two by fifteen feet, the purpose of which I cannot even conjecture.

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* From the Order of the Lords Justices, given in this Chapter, it will be seen how James Magrath was encouraged to carry away the materials of those buildings. Hence we may conclude that much of the valuable ornamental stonework was transferred to the old keep of Termon Magrath. Some of those carved stones were used as headstones, or monuments, over graves in Templecarne churchyard. A considerable part of the building stones for the edifices on Station Island were here collected. Many of them, also, were cast into the lake, and have not been recovered. In the *debris* I found but a few blocks of limestone. These, as well as the freestone, must have been conveyed from quarries near Pettigo, fully nine miles distant.

Within this area of one and a half acres, besides the buildings already outlined, were also included the convent gardens. Those gardens are still easily traceable. Even yet the sewers, draining those gardens, can be discerned a little above the shore-line. Besides being free from the rushy and heathy coating of the western portion of the island, they are swarded by a close carpet of grass, and decked with violets, cowslips and ferns, and their terraces bordered with willows and woodbine.

Hither the pilgrims, availing of an immemorial custom, repair for an occasional excursion from Station Island. Fondly do they delight to linger in this charming spot. The solemnity of the place, the traditions of its former renown, the air of religious solitude that pervades this island hermitage, the story of its desecration and ruin, are calculated to fix upon the mind the deepest impression, apart altogether from the singular attractiveness of the island and its surrounding scenery.

CHAPTER XIII.

DR. KIRWAN, BISHOP OF KILLALA, PILGRIM AND CONFESSOR AT ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY—TESTIMONY OF THE NUNCIO RINUCCINI IN ITS FAVOUR—THE BELL OF ST. DABHEOC—LETTER OF QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA IN BEHALF OF THE PILGRIMAGE—ST. PATRICK'S CROSS.

IN the life of Dr. Kirwan, Bishop of Killala, by the Ven. John Lynch, * Archdeacon of Tuam, we have a faithful description of the austerities then endured at this penitential retreat, as well as of the motives which induced the faithful to flock thither in such numbers. Dr. Lynch writes:—

"That he" (Dr. Kirwan) "might not be wanting in any species of piety, he reverenced in his soul the custom of making pilgrimages. Nor was he satisfied with visiting such places in Connaught as were consecrated by the sojourn of the saints, and, above all, the rugged mountain called *Cruagh-Padrick*, †

* This Life was printed in 1669 under the title of *Icon Antistitis*, and in 1848 it was republished, together with a translation into English, by the late Rev. C. P. Meehan, Dublin.

† The "station" on Croagh-Patrick, near Westport, is still held on the last Friday of Summer, though some frequent it on the 15th of August. About three or four hundred pilgrims annually visit it. On the shoulder of the mountain and within about 300 feet of the summit is the first station, in shape a stone circle, round which the pilgrims make fifteen circuits reciting a certain number of *Paters* and *Aves*. From this point to the summit the ascent is most difficult, being for a part of the way almost perpendicular. On the crown of the mountain, which is a flat plane of about half an acre in extent, are the remains of

which he was wont to frequent, often ascending its steep sides, a thousand paces in height, and there staying, according to usage, on the very summit, covered with loose stones, and creeping on bended knees over the rough rock-fragments, which struck one with horror, not to speak of the danger of yawning chasms and precipices. But, often, too, did he go into Ulster, to the far-famed Purgatory of St. Patrick, in which the pilgrims were wont to abstain from meat for nine days, using no food save a little bread and water from the lake. During one of the nine days they are shut up in the dismal darkness of a cavern, and, therein fasting, partake of nothing save a little water to moisten their throats when parched with thirst. At noontide and evening they go on bended knees over paths beaten by the feet of saints, and strewn with sharp stones. In other quarters they walk barefooted over rugged ways, in the olden time frequented by holy men to satisfy for their transgressions. Sometimes walking and sometimes on their knees they advance to a considerable distance in the water. Thus do they spend the day pouring out their prayers to God, and listening to holy discourses; nor in this sacred place is there to be seen, or heard anything scurrilous or ludicrous. When night comes on they lie down, not to enjoy repose, but to snatch a few moments sleep; their beds are of straw, nor do they use any pillow but their garments. Thrice each day did Francis, with the other

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"St. Patrick's Altar," or oratory, some cells, and a large penitential bed or circle. At these the pilgrim completes the number of his orisons. Round the summit of Croagh-Patrick runs a low parapet, which precludes any danger of falling over its steep sides. On Cruachan-Aigle St. Patrick made a forty days' retreat; here he overcame the Cacodemons; and here also took place "the Striving" with the angel Victor, described in Aubrey de Vere's "Legends of St. Patrick." The view from Croagh-Patrick, standing over 2,500 feet above sea level, baffles description. We made Murrisk Abbey on the shore of Clew Bay our point of ascent, and it was almost five hours before we reached it on our return. Only the young and agile are capable of hazarding this feat of Alpine climbing; yet among the pilgrims, as I learned, many old persons are to be met with.

pilgrims, punctually perform these duties, and, in addition, he diligently applied himself to hearing confessions and preaching sermons."

One of the most favourable testimonies to the renown and sanctity of this pilgrimage is that furnished by the Papal Nuncio, Rinuccini, in the report of his nunciature, made to the Holy See on his return to Rome in 1649. After stating how much he desired to rescue * from the hands of the Calvinists the far-famed Purgatory of St. Patrick, he adds:—

"The devotions of this deep cave are of great antiquity, though their first origin is uncertain. It is agreed that the saint chose that spot for his holy retreats; and the visions with which he was there favoured by God were well known and approved of by succeeding generations. At present the fury of the Calvinists has levelled everything with the ground, and filled up the cave; and thus they have destroyed every vestige of the spot, so do they seek to cancel every trace of its memory. It seemed to me that my mission from Rome should embrace this, too, as one of its special objects; and I would have been, in part, content, could I have planted the cross on that island. But I was not blessed with the fulfilment of this design."†

In the *Spicilegium Ossoriense* (Vol. II., pp. 201-203)

* In a note to Dr. Kirwan's Life, *Pii Antistitis Icon*, Father Meehan mentions a fact well worthy of attention, attesting the veneration of the Purgatory in the seventeenth century. He says, "In the year 1647, Rinuccini engaged Owen Roe O'Neill to drive the Parliamentarians out of Sligo; but, owing to the dissensions then rife in the Supreme Council, the northern General was not able to undertake the expedition; whereon the Nuncio, writing to Cardinal Panzirolo, states that if he had 8,000 dollars, he would have made 'Red Owen' irresistible, and that army, having seized Enniskillen, would have marched to recover 'the holy place, called St. Patrick's Purgatory,' now more than a hundred years in the possession of heretics."—Rinuccini, p. 224.

† Nunciatura, p. 414.

there is a letter, taken from the Rinuccini MSS., written in 1660 by the Bishops and Clergy of the Province of Armagh in defence of the illustrious Primate, Edmund O'Reilly, against the accusations of Peter Walsh and other agents of the English faction. Among the signatories to this letter, the seventh name on the list is that of "Thadeus O'Clery, S.T.D., Vicar-General of Raphoe, Protonotary Apostolic, and *Prior of St. Patrick's Purgatory.*" The same dignitary was present at a meeting of the Bishops, and other ecclesiastics, held at Clonmacnoise in 1649, and subscribed its decrees as Procurator of the Bishop of Raphoe. Others, too, we may admit, of the Raphoe clergy administered occasionally to the wants of the pilgrimage; and to this may be ascribed the tradition that at one time the pilgrimage was conducted by the clergy of Raphoe. But, we must bear in mind that in those troublous times extensive jurisdiction was conferred upon Irish missionaries, and that the field of their zeal and labours was not even confined to one diocese, but often extended over several dioceses; as an instance of this we find the name of Rev. Dominick Bradley, or O'Brullaghan, a zealous priest of the diocese of Derry (of whom more hereafter), recorded as having frequently visited St. Patrick's Purgatory, and actively engaged in its station duties.

When the community of the Franciscan monastery of Donegal were forced to abandon their cloisters in 1601, the greater part of them found a home and a refuge in Louvain, Brussels and Antwerp, still some remained behind in their native country, hoping that the dawn of better days might witness their restoration to their plundered abode by the banks of the Eske. Of these, we may infer, some extended the consolations of religion to their afflicted countrymen, and even volunteered their

services in the difficult and dangerous office of ministering to the pilgrims, who still came flocking to the sanctuary of Lough Derg. About the time in question many of the Augustinian houses in the North of Ireland had passed into the hands of the Franciscans; many of the missionary clergy were also Franciscans, and even some of the bishops. In a *Relatio status* of the northern dioceses by Primate Oliver Plunkett, dated March 6th, 1675, we find the following reference to Clogher and Raphoe, fully conveying what we have already said:—

"The diocese of Clogher is about fifty miles long and sixteen wide; it has thirty-five parish priests, two convents of the Franciscans, and one of the Dominicans. The Bishop is Dr. Patrick Duffy, formerly a Franciscan friar."

Of Raphoe it is said that it possessed one convent of the Franciscans. From those convents, we may rightly conclude, some of the friars were deputed each season to minister to the spiritual wants of the pilgrims, as down to the time of Friar Anthony O'Doherty (1763) the friars do not appear to have had a permanent residence on the island. When Dr. Hugh MacMahon, bishop of Clogher, visited the island in 1714, he found the Franciscans in charge; and, later on in the eighteenth century, we find Father M'Grath and Father O'Doherty conducting it. A Friar Conway * is also named as among the Franciscans who attended to the pilgrims at Lough Derg. From "An Account of the Jesuit Missions in Ireland from 1641 to 1650, written in 1651," and published in the *Spicilegium Ossoriense* (Vol. II., p. 76), I take the following paragraph

* This Friar Conway was a maternal relative of the late Edward Nicholson of Beech-Hill, Derry, who for the greater part of his life made an annual pilgrimage to Lough Derg.

dealing with St. Patrick's Purgatory, which I thus translate :—

"There has existed in Ireland for fully twelve hundred years a celebrated pilgrimage to a holy island, where the Purgatory of St. Patrick has been frequented with uninterrupted devotion by great crowds of people. A great number of Parliamentarian forces, both horse and foot, having been landed on that island, expelled with summary vengeance the Franciscan Friars who had care of the holy place. And, lest anything might be wanting to their deeds of wanton desecration, they defiled the crypt itself, or the Purgatorium, and then filled it up with stones and mud. In consequence of which sacrilege they were all visited with the anger of Heaven, and died in a few days after of dysentery and a foul internal malady."

It would be difficult to determine whether the above passage refers to the expulsion of the monks by Sir William Stewart, or to a subsequent inroad from the Parliamentarian forces, perhaps after the fatal day of Scariff-Hollis, 21st of June, 1650.

The Rev. John Richardson, Protestant Rector of Belturbet, in the year 1727, wrote a bitterly hostile account of St. Patrick's Purgatory, entitled the "Folly of Pilgrimages," in which he relates how a certain Frenchman, named Ludovicus Pyrrhus, of Bretagne, came to Lough Derg about the year 1693, for the purpose of discovering the ancient purgatorial cave. Mr. Richardson's words are :—

"In order to do this he employed labourers to dig and search for it throughout both these islands, the neighbouring priests giving their assistance. He continued two summers at this work, and after he had spent all the money he brought with him, fell a trafficking and applied the profit to the same use. At last as he was searching among the rubbish of a dwelling-house in the largest island, he found a window with iron

stanchers. Mr. Art MacCullen,* popish priest of the parish, Mr. Mark Magrath, and Mr. James Maxwell, a Protestant, who gave me this account, being present. There happened to be a dark cavity under the window, and, after digging a little deeper, they found it to be a cellar window; whereupon Ludovicus Pyrrhus ceased from searching any more, and returned to his native country. Among the rubbish they found a little bell, which is now in the College of Dublin; and an image, which is said to be the image of Caoranach, and is kept on the lesser island for the satisfaction of the pilgrims."

Whether this Ludovicus Pyrrhus had been in search of the ancient purgatorial cave, or of the valuables secreted here by the Augustinian monks, I cannot say; but it would seem that this incident it was which gave rise to the popular tradition, namely, that a good many years ago, treasure-seekers had torn up the ruins at the eastern extremity of Saints' Island, but failed in discovering the much coveted valuables.

The bell said to have been found in the ruins on Saints' Island by Ludovicus Pyrrhus, was probably the bell of St. Dabheoc. I have heard that many years ago a square bronze bell, purporting to be St. Dabheoc's Bell, was preserved on one of the altars at Lough Derg; but there is no longer any trace or record of its whereabouts. If this be the bell found by Ludovicus Pyrrhus, which is very likely, and if it be true that in Mr. Richardson's time it was preserved in the "College of Dublin" (*i.e.* Trinity College), I think it may be hereafter identified.

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* In the registry of Irish Parish Priests, *anno* 1704, I find the name of Rev. Art MacCullen thus recorded: "Art MacCullin; place of abode, Derryroan; age, fifty-eight; parish, Carne" (*i.e.* Templecarne): "time of receiving popish orders, about May 1670; received orders at Dublin from Oliver Plunket, Titular Primate of Ireland." –See *Irish Eccl. Record*, Vol. 12.

The other object of antiquity, namely, the image of *Caoranach*,* also said to have been discovered in the cellar of the monastery on Saints' Island, cannot now be traced or identified. By some it was supposed, but erroneously, to have been identical with the heraldic composition, which appears on the date stone of an edifice, erected on Station Island by Friar Anthony O'Doherty, O.S.F., in the year 1763. Of this sculpturing I shall merely say in the present connexion, that it represents the family arms of the O'Doherty clan, showing a stag with antlers of goodly proportions.

Among the visitors who came to Lough Derg in the

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* The *Caoranach*, also called *Caol*, was a mythological animal, partly a wolf and in part a serpent, which infested those parts, and spread terror and ruin on every side. This was very likely the serpent, which St. Patrick, as the legend narrates, put to death, and whose blood dyed the water of the lake red.

I shall here insert the legend about the serpent, as taken from an old MS. of the O'Clerighs, and published by Donnellan in the notes to his translation of the *Four Masters* :—

"An extraordinary serpent called the 'Caol' was in the habit of thus passing its time. It came to Finlough (Lough Derg), each morning, where it remained until night, and then proceeded to Gleann-na-caole, near Lough Erne, and there during the night it consumed a great deal of the produce of that locality; until St. Patrick, the religious Champion of God, came into Ireland, and, hearing of this monster, he went straight to Finlough, where the serpent then was on an island in the lake. Immediately it took to the water, and with its devouring mouth open it set all the lake in commotion. . . . . Finally it directed its course to the shore of the island, and opening its mouth, it cast forth its infernal poisonous matter, like a shower of hail stones, over the lake, but chiefly to the place where the saint and his clergy stood. The saint, however, having prayed to God, cast his crozier at the serpent, which pierced its breast, so that it turned its back at him, and its blood flowed so profusely that it turned all the water of the lake red. After that, St. Patrick said that Finlough (the fair lake) would be called Lough Derg (*i.e.* the red lake), thenceforth until the Day of Judgement."

seventeenth century, through motives of curiosity and inquisitiveness, may be mentioned a Mr. Ashe, whom James I. sent for that purpose; also a Mr. Coppinger; and later still Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, who in company with one Anthony Lipsett, a surveyor, was able to give a full description of it. Before Lord Dillon's visit, Coppinger describes the church as "furnished at the east with a high altar, covered with linen cloth, over which directly hangs the image of our Lady, with our Saviour in her arms; on the right, the picture of our Saviour on the cross; and on the left, the picture of the three kings, offering their presents to our Saviour."

The church here spoken of is St. Mary's Church, which, between demolitions and restorations, always maintained its position on Station Island, and on or about the site of the present St. Mary's. At that time it was the only church of the pilgrimage, as St. Patrick's, or "Prison Chapel," was not erected for many years after, and not until the narrow vault, called the *Caverna Purgatorii*, was discontinued as the place of vigil and meditation.

Six years after the second demolition of the Purgatory, Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. of England, wrote a letter to the ill-fated Lord Stafford, who was then Lord Deputy, asking him to use his best efforts to allow the devotion of St. Patrick's Purgatory to be no longer disallowed, that such a favour on his part would give her great satisfaction, and that he would have no reason to repent of having done her so great a service. In the letter the Queen adds that she commissioned the Earl of Antrim to treat with him on the subject, and she concludes by reminding him how grateful she would be on every occasion for such a particular favour. The letter, which is very interesting, will be found in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, and is well worthy of reproduction.

It is written in the French of that period, thus:—

"Monsieur Wentworth,

"Je vouz ay escrit cy devant pour des Recommendations; où je vous ay recognue sy prompt à mé obliger, que cela m'a fait vous escrire moy meme, pour vouz en remercier; et aussi pour prier d'une chose qui est, que vous voulies soufrier q'une Devotion que le peuple de ce pays a toujours en a une place a Saint Patrice ne soit point abolie: Iss en useront sy modestement, que vous n'aures point de Raison de vous en repentir; et vous me feres un grand plaisir. J'donne charge a M. Antrim de soliciter l'affaire aupres de vous. C'est pourquoy je finirai, en vous assurant, que vous ne trouveres point en moy une Personne ingrate, mais une qui vous fera paroistre en toutes occasions le Desir qu'elle a de vous obliger, et qui sera toujours

Votre bien bonne Amie

HENRIETTA MARIE R."

To this letter Wentworth sent a reply from Dublin Castle, dated 10th October, 1638, in which he states that the "thing itself" (mark his dread of even naming the place) "was destroyed before his coming to the kingdom, and that he was right glad none of his counsel was in the matter." He says that being absolutely taken away there is greater difficulty in restoring it. Besides, the place is in the midst of the great Scottish Plantations "where some men's zeal hath run them already beyond their wits." He next expresses an opinion that "he may do passing wisely to let this devotion rest awhile till there may be a fitter opportunity apprehended for effecting her Majesty's satisfaction therein."

One of the oldest relics of the ancient sanctuary of Lough Derg is the Cross of St. Patrick.* This un-

* In a series of articles published in the *Derry Journal* during the summer of 1878, and written by a distinguished priest of the diocese of

doubtedly stood on Saints' Island when the religious establishment was there; and, judging from its style and art, dates as far back as the twelfth century at least, though Mr. Wakeman seems to think it may be as old as the ninth century. The sketch of this cross (which we here present to our readers), drawn on the spot by Mr. Wakeman on the 4th of September, 1877, and engraved

St. Patrick's Cross, Station Island.

Derry, now deceased, reference is made to this cross in the following eloquent terms:—"The grand cross, which had it been spared by Balfour and Stewart, might take its place with the celebrated crosses of Monasterboice and Clonmacnoise, was flung into the lake, but the shaft still remained. It was taken out of the lake and erected on the island, where it remains a memorial of the past, and a testimony of the artistic skill of our forefathers." The same writer adds, that "the cross of Lough Derg was a unique specimen of a cross, there being few of the same class to be seen in Ireland at present."

on the wood by Mrs. Millard, includes also the fragment of St. Dabheoc's Cross, described at page 41 of this work.

St. Patrick's Cross exhibits more artistic skill than the fragment referred to, and, though it clearly belongs to a later date, it too is unquestionably of great antiquity. The shaft of St. Patrick's Cross on Station Island is circular, with a raised band of spiral tracery running around it; the base and capital being octagonal. Its dimensions are—Height of shaft between pedestal and capital, 3 ft. 7 in.; height of capital, 4½ in.; diameter of capital, 8 in. The capital is formed by three raised parallel bands with two hollow grooves between, running round it horizontally. A small portion of the capital has been broken off, and the shaft itself has been fractured a little above the pedestal, but it is kept together by an iron band or clasp. The order of demolition from the Privy Council and the letter of Sir William Stewart plainly show that the cross was thus broken when the iconoclasts invaded Saints' Island, and it forcibly attests how complete was the work of the destroyer. This cross now stands within a little mound of stones, or *circulus*, near the southern gable of St. Patrick's, or "Prison" Chapel, though its former *situs* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was midway between St. Mary's Church and the *Caverna Purgatorii*, between the present St. Mary's Church and the modern campanile. The shaft must have been surmounted by a stone cross, which rested in the socket still to be seen at its top. The cross was broken off, and no trace of it is to be found, but in its place there is a plain iron cross, made fast by lead. Around it *ex voto* offerings may be seen suspended. The popular legend about it is that it was transferred miraculously from Saints' Island, where it formerly stood; and that the event confirmed the selection of Station Island as the place of pilgrimage.

The statement hazarded in the *Irish Monthly* of January, 1878, that this stone cross is the identical Clogh-Oir, is unsupported by the least tittle of evidence; for, it is well known that the Clogh-Oir stood at the royal and ecclesiastical city of Clogher, where it is still pointed out leaning against the northern transept of the Protestant church there. Of this "grand old cross with its fluted shaft," wrote Dr. Henry Jones, 4th Protestant Bishop of Clogher, who visited the island in 1647. He says:—"He saw a stone cross, part broken, part standing, and in the east of the church was another cross, made of twigs, interwoven." What suggestive words! the poor friars, unable to provide a cross of stone in place of those so ruthlessly broken, were compelled to provide as a substitute a cross with "twigs interwoven."

What incalculable good the Sanctuary of Lough Derg has contributed to religion and morality since its origin, and with what oil of comfort it has soothed the bleeding wounds of our persecuted country during the long and dismal penal times, will never be fully realised until the great Accounting Day. The learned Balmez, in his *European Civilization*, speaking of the advantages rendered to society by the retreats of the solitaries, and by pilgrimages thereto, justly says:—

"It is impossible not to understand how much these communications must have contributed to correct and elevate ideas relating to religion and morality, and to amend and purify morals."

Notwithstanding the enactments so cruelly enforced against this venerable retreat, it still remained firmly as ever rooted in the hearts and affections of the Irish race; it has outlived the persecution of Elizabeth, James the First, and the Cromwellian freebooters, and it still continues to flourish with ever-increasing life and vigour.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONFISCATION OF THE LANDS OF TERMON-DABHEOC—WRITINGS AGAINST THE PILGRIMAGE—THE STATUTE OF QUEEN ANNE—BISHOP HUGH MACMAHON'S VISITATION OF THE SANCTUARY—"B. D."—DR. DE BURGO—TURLOUGH O'CAROLAN.

E have already seen that the property conferred by our pious ancestors upon the religious community of St. Dabheoc at Lough Derg was known for many centuries under the name of Termon-Dabheoc. Its area comprised 30,000 acres, and it was valued by Griffith at £3,500 per annum. About the fourteenth century, the Magraths having become termoners of those church lands, it came to be known as Termon-Magrath. In the 38th year of Queen Elizabeth, Donagh Magrath, chieftain of Termon-Magrath, and his eldest son, Milerius, the apostate Franciscan friar, surrendered to the Queen the lands of Termon-Magrath and Termon-O'Mongan for the purpose of reducing the lands to English tenure, and with intent that they should be regranted to Donagh for life, with remainder to Miler, and to Miler's sons in succession. In the same year they were so granted.* In the year 1604 the site of the monastery of Lough Derg, and the lands of Termon-Magrath with other estates, were granted by James I. to Robert Leicester.† In 1610, Termon-Magrath and Termon-O'Mongan were conferred upon James Magrath,

* *Vide* Morrin's Calendar, Vol. 2, pp. 361-362.

† See Erck's Patent Rolls, p. 107.

son of Miler Magrath, subject to a chief rent of £10 yearly. This James Magrath, it might seem, connived at the pilgrimage, if we take him to be the same person as that referred to by Richardson, who says that in 1727 there stood in the south-eastern part of Station Island an altar, called "St. Patrick's Altar," with an old cross having a circle on it, and the inscription, *Jacobus M'Grath fieri fecit, 1632.* Of this inscription I failed to find any trace on the island. The Auchinleck MSS. state that James Magrath afterwards disposed of his interest in the termonlands to Dr. Spottiswoode, Protestant bishop of Clogher, appointed to Clogher 1621, and who died in 1644. The extract from the Auchinleck MSS. is as follows:—"Nowe had the Bishoppe" (Dr. Spottiswoode) "got eight or nyne Townelandes lying contigue to his new howse in Clogher, which he destinat to be a perpetuall Demesnes for his succeeding Bishopps, and gott an Act of Estate past thereon. He recovered also other lands, his predecessor, Bishopp Montgomerie, never was in possession of; as, namelie, the Isle of Devenish from the Lord Hastings; the greatest part of the Island of Inishmore, from Sir Ralph Goore, Baronet; the lands of Termon Grathe, from James Magrath, etc."* Thus did those possessions become part of the see lands of the Protestant bishops of Clogher.

Dr. Spottiswoode was succeeded by Dr. Henry Jones, on whose translation to Meath in 1661, Dr. John Leslie was appointed to Clogher by Charles II. He fixed his residence at Glasslough in the county of Monaghan, and became the founder of the family, whose present lineal representative is Sir John Leslie, Bart. From Dr. Leslie's time down to the year 1836 his descendants have

* See Rev. W. H. Bradshaw's *Enniskillen Long Ago.*

continued in possession of the lands of Termon-Magrath under what is known as a bishop's lease, *i.e.* a lease for 21 years, renewable for a like term on payment of a fine.* On the 16th July, 1836, a deed was executed between Dr. Tottenham, Protestant bishop of Clogher, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and Christina Powell Leslie, and John Francis Fosberry (the two latter being trustees of the will of Charles Powell Leslie, 2nd,) whereby the said trustees agreed to purchase the fee-simple of the Pettigo estate, or Termon-Magrath, the amount of purchase being £4,508, 6s. 4d., the lands to be subject to the annual fee-farm rent of £461, 10s. 9¼d. The total purchase paid for that extensive estate of 49 sessiaghs, which are fully described with their metes and bounds in Hill's *Plantation of Ulster*, not far exceeds its present annual rental. The Leslie family having thus become closely connected with the ancient patrimony of Lough Derg, occasional references to that family in the sequence of this narrative will be the more readily understood.

We gather from what has been already said how much this place of pilgrimage had exercised the zeal of the Protestant bishops of Clogher. To effectually put a stop to this devotion they regarded as their paramount duty. Dr. James Spottiswoode is said to have written a treatise regarding it, intituled *St. Patrick's Purgatory*. His successor, Dr. Henry Jones, also took it to task in his *Patrick, his Purgatory* (London, 1647). Richardson in his *Folly of Pilgrimages* (Dublin, 1727), acknowledges in the preface to that work, the helps he received from the "present and late bishop of Clogher, the draught of the whole island, and all the superstitious things in it

* In modern times the rent reserved by this lease was £60 per year, and the renewal fine £400.

was sent to me by Bishop Ashe, being made by an ingenious and worthy clergyman, the Rev. Joseph Story, pursuant to his lordship's direction." We also find that the Rev. Philip Skelton, Rector of Fintona (his works, 6 vols., Dublin, 1770), dedicates his account of Lough Derg to the then Protestant bishop of Clogher (probably Dr. Robert Clayton of Arian notoriety). Another book, styled a *Description of Lough Derg,* was published by the Rev. Mr. Hewson, Protestant Archdeacon of Armagh (Dublin, 1727). These and kindred notices abound in misrepresentations, and are chiefly caricatures, holding up to ridicule the austere penances and devotions of a persecuted people, who, despite their many sufferings and privations, continued to flock to this hallowed retreat.

From the destruction of the sanctuary of Lough Derg, in 1632, down to the second year of the reign of Queen Anne (1704), the pilgrimage continued each year increasing in the number of its votaries, and in its reputation for sanctity. In that year, however, an Act was passed prohibiting pilgrimages in general, but especially that of St. Patrick's Purgatory, in the following words:—

"And whereas the superstitions of Popery are greatly increased and upheld by the pretended sanctity of places, especially of a place called St. Patrick's Purgatory, in the County of Donegal, and of wells, to which pilgrimages are made by vast numbers at certain seasons . . . . . Be it further enacted, that all such meetings and assemblies shall be deemed and adjudged riots and unlawful assemblies, and punishable as such, in all or any persons meeting at such places as aforesaid. And all sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other magistrates, are hereby required to be diligent in putting the laws in force against all offenders in the above particulars in due execution."

And further on in the same enactment it is decreed that a fine of ten shillings be inflicted on any offender,

and, in default of payment, that he be publicly whipped. Also that persons who at such assemblies build booths or cabins for the sale of victuals or any other commodity, shall forfeit and pay the sum of twenty shillings, to be forthwith levied by distress. This enactment, 2nd Anne, chap. 6, thus concludes:—"And all and every the said magistrates are hereby required to demolish all crosses, pictures, and inscriptions that are anywhere publicly set up, and are the occasions of Popish superstitions." *

As to the numbers making the pilgrimage in the commencement of the eighteenth century, the Rev. Mr. Hewson, already referred to, who wrote his account of St. Patrick's Purgatory on the 1st of August, 1701, says:—"There were near 5,000 there last year, as the Prior told me, who registers their names; but not 2,000 had been there this year, when I was there,† and commonly more men than women." He afterwards adds:—"There were about 300 of these devotees (sixty of which were in the caves) when I was there." The more effectually to put a stop to the pilgrimage, the mountain district leading to Lough Derg was "planted" with Protestant settlers. In that district, extending from Pettigo to Lough Derg, the descendants of those planters yet survive; and though their co-religionists in the neighbouring counties formerly gave much annoyance to the pilgrims, yet to the great credit of the Protestant colony in the neighbourhood of Lough Derg be it said that, with rare exceptions, they have shown a kindly disposition towards the pilgrimage,

* It was only on 13th July, 1871, that the above enactment was repealed by the 34 and 35 Vic., cap. 48.

† The 1st of August must be regarded as an early day in the Station season. From that date until the close of the Station on 15th August, there are usually more arrivals than in all the previous weeks of the Station put together.

and instances can be latterly recorded where they have contributed valuable assistance in the erection of churches and other buildings on Station Island.

To give the names of all the distinguished persons who made pilgrimage to Lough Derg within the past two hundred years would, indeed, fill many a page. Although the register of them has not been preserved, yet we are able to glean from different sources the names of some of the most noteworthy. From the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Vol. 2, No. 10 (a source upon which I have drawn for many facts and documents in this work), we learn that Dr. Hugh MacMahon, bishop of Clogher, * presented in the year 1714 to the Sacred Congregation a *Relatio Status* of his diocese; and among other matters refers at length to the pilgrimage of Lough Derg, of which he made a special visitation. He came to the island of Lough Derg in the disguise of a merchant from Dublin; for, owing to the temper of the times, it was not yet safe for a bishop of the Catholic Church to appear in public in his episcopal capacity. I here subjoin a translation of the Latin copy as found in the *Record*, from which it will be seen that certain changes had been introduced into the ritual of the pilgrimage since the time when Peter Lombard wrote of it. This most important document, written in the year 1714, runs thus:—

"In the northern part of the diocese of Clogher, in a small island, completely surrounded by a lake, is situated that most celebrated place, commonly called St. Patrick's Purgatory,

* He was appointed to Clogher in 1707, and translated to Armagh in 1715. Dr. Renehan's *Collections* erroneously enter his appointment to Clogher in 1708, and his translation to Armagh in 1709. The same work inaccurately describes him as the brother of his successors in the primacy, Hugh and Ross MacMahon.

towards which, from the beginning of June to the end of August, there crowd each year, from all parts even the most remote of this kingdom, thousands of men and women of every age and condition, who there spend nine days, living on one meal each day of oaten bread and water. They rest upon the cold ground, walk barefoot, and their feet are frequently cut and bleeding. Thrice each day do they visit the different stations over a rough path strewn with sharp pebbles, a considerable part of which is covered with water knee-deep. At length on the ninth day, having first made a general confession, having expiated all the faults of their life, and being nourished with the Bread of Life, they enter before twilight a subterraneous pit, which is called the purgatory, and here they remain four and twenty continuous hours, all the time awake and engaged in prayer, without any refreshment either of food or drink. When the same hour arrives on the following day they go forth, and dip their heads thrice in the cold water. And thus is completed that pilgrimage, to which idle inventors of fables have added so many exaggerations about spectres and visions, which never had any existence save in the distorted imaginations of such story-tellers. For the three months during which this pilgrimage lasts, Masses are celebrated from dawn till mid-day; confessions are heard; twice or three times each day a sermon is addressed to the people, who with copious tears, sobs, lamentations, and other marks of penance, frequently interrupt the preacher. And with such sweetness of interior grace does our most merciful Lord enrich this arduous and very austere pilgrimage, that they who before appeared obdurate and plunged in the mire of vice, came to feel the strongest stings of compunction. Nor are they satisfied with approaching this island once or twice; for I have found in this diocese persons who made the pilgrimage as often as fourteen times. The plenary indulgence accorded by the Holy Father, Pope Clement X., to those visiting this pilgrimage (which will soon expire, and requires a renewal), has added no small increase to the fervour of the pious pilgrims. It is regarded by all as little short of a

prodigy how this pilgrimage, though prohibited by name, in the foremost place, and under the most severe penalties by Act of Parliament, suffered little or no interruption from the bitter Scotch Calvinists living in the neighbourhood and elsewhere. When I myself visited the place, under the guise of a Dublin merchant (for under the disguise of a trader or tradesman the prelates and non-registered priests of this country generally find it necessary to conceal themselves), the minister of that district received me very kindly. Though everywhere else throughout the kingdom the ecclesiastical functions have ceased, on account of the prevailing persecution; in this island, as if it were placed in another orb, the exercise of religion is free and public, which is ascribed to a special favour of Divine Providence, and to the merits of St. Patrick.

"When I was there, an English Protestant, induced by the fame of the place, and out of curiosity, came there; and, having been moved to compunction at the sight of the penitents, forthwith abjured his heresy. The Franciscan Fathers, beyond all the other ecclesiastics who come there, labour the most strenuously. At this pilgrimage I remarked one custom (not to call it an abuse), namely, that they who are about to enter the cave have Mass celebrated for them, which is always a *Missa de requiem*, just as if they were dead to the world, and ready for sepulture; which when I was anxious to abrogate, at least on Sundays and the principal festivals, on which should be said the Mass conformable to the office, they claimed the authority of immemorial possession and of custom to the contrary, first originated, as tradition says, by St. Patrick himself; which, being constantly asserted by learned and scrupulous men, has perplexed me, and therefore I beg to be instructed by your Eminences as to what I am to do thereon."

Some time after Bishop Hugh MacMahon had sent to Rome the *Relatio* just quoted, supplicating the Sovereign Pontiff to grant a renewal of the indulgences vouchsafed to this pilgrimage, Cardinal Orsini, of the order of Friars

Preachers, Archbishop of Benevento—and in 1724 raised to the Papal chair under the name of Benedict XIII.—addressed a homily to his flock on the subject of St. Patrick's Purgatory. Having already freely quoted from that masterly address, I shall here rest content by giving the words of the learned De Burgo in reference to it. That eminent prelate in his *Hibernia Dominicana* (p. 5,) thus speaks of it:—"*De eo sermonem habuit ad populum, ut me memini Romæ inter sermones suos typis vulgatos legisse,*" *i.e.*, "Upon it" (viz. St. Patrick's Purgatory), "he addressed a sermon to his flock, which at Rome I remember to have read amongst his published addresses."

Thomas de Burgo himself visited St. Patrick's Purgatory in the year 1748, and in his *Hibernia Dominicana* gives us his impressions of it:—"So great," he says, "are the penitential deeds performed there, that they exceed in my opinion those of any other pilgrimage in the world." He says that the place was called Purgatory on account of the severity of its penitential exercises. "*Locus ille luendis peccatorum pœnis destinatus purgatorium dicitur, non quidem posthumum, sed vitale seu viatorium in præsenti vita.*" And he adds:—"I do not relate mere matters of hearsay, but what I have witnessed with my own eyes; for, I had the great happiness to visit in the year 1748 that island, which was consecrated by the presence and the miracles of the most holy Patrick, and which still affords an illustrious example of the austere penances of the primitive ages of the Church." (*Hib. Dominicana*, p. 4, *et seq.*) He says that each pilgrim repeats daily the Lord's Prayer and the Angelical Salutation nearly three hundred times, the Apostles' Creed about one hundred times, together with the entire Rosary of the Blessed Virgin three times. He

further adds that each pilgrim, in performing the rounds of his station, travelled over a distance of two miles.

For over one hundred and fifty years the only guide to the devotional exercises of this pilgrimage was a little handbook with the following title—"The Pilgrimage of Lough Derg, by B.D." It was published in several places, among the rest in Belfast, in 8vo, in 1726, in Dublin, in 16mo, in 1752, and in Strabane in 1820. Its circulation was very extensive, and until recently copies of it could be had each season on Station Island. The authorship of this manual of the Station devotions remained unknown, at least to me, until I fortunately met with the late Very Rev. B. T. Russell, D.D., at that time (1879,) Prior of the Dominican Convent, Dundalk, who unravelled the mystery by referring me to De Burgo's *Hib. Dominicana*, where the life of "B.D." is succinctly given. The better to escape the danger of detection, that devoted missionary transposed the initials of his name, "B.D.," which should be "D.B.," *i.e.* Dominick Brullanghan, or Bradley, a name yet not uncommon in Derry and Innishowen. De Burgo gives us the following notice of his life:—

"Fr. Dominick Brullanghan was an *alumnus* of the Convent of Coleraine. He was uncle by the father's side to Patrick Brullanghan, bishop of Derry. Having completed his course of studies with great credit in the College of Holy Cross at Louvain, he returned to Ulster, where, during a long series of years, he zealously discharged missionary duty. Being second to none as a preacher in that province, he reaped a large harvest of souls for Christ; and for that reason he was deservedly raised to the title of Master in Theology. At length, worn out with years and toil, he closed his career in his native county of Derry, anno 1746. He paid frequent visits to the Island of Lough Derg (*Lacûs Rubri*), consecrated by the penances and miracles of St. Patrick, and for that

cause is it named St. Patrick's Purgatory. Here he often preached to the people, and when he found that the faithful were not well informed regarding that holy place, and of the method of performing the pilgrimage, which is, I must say, the most arduous in the whole world, he published a little book, whose title in English is—'The Pilgrimage of Lough Derg, by B.D.'"

Some time before this, the exact year is not recorded, another distinguished Irishman came here on pilgrimage. This was no less a personage than Turlough O'Carolan, "Last of the Bards,"—

"Who erst our halls with melody did fill." *

The remains of O'Carolan (as stated in Hardiman's *Minstrelsy*) await the final resurrection in Kilronan, the church of the Duigenan family, in MacDermott Roe's vault. In his youth he became intimately acquainted with one Bridget Cruise, but he afterwards married Mary Maguire, of the Maguires of Tempo, once a noble and powerful family, but long deprived of their ancestral possessions. The well-authenticated tradition still lives at Lough Derg, how O'Carolan, when old and blind, occupied the pilgrims' boat on his return from the island. At the landing-place a number of pilgrims were eager to offer their services to the helpless one to land. O'Carolan no sooner touched a hand stretched out to guide him, than he paused and exclaimed, "This is the hand of Bridget Cruise." † On this subject the late Samuel Lover has written a charming song, sung to the sweetest of airs, and entitled "Carolan and Bridget Cruise."

* For an account of his last resting-place see *The Legend of Kilronan*, by "Lageniensis" (Dublin, 1877).

† The story will be found fully told in Hayes' *Ballads of Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 27, head-note to Samuel Lover's Song on O'Carolan.

Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee in his poem on *The Death of Carolan,* pays the following touching tribute to his memory:—

"Last of our ancient Minstrels! those who lent
A buoyant motive to a suffering race,
Whose saving song, into their being blent,
Sustained them by its passion and its grace,
God rest you! may your judgment dues be light,
Dear Turlough! and the purgatorial days
Be few and short, till cloth'd in holy white,
Your soul may come before the Throne of rays."

CHAPTER XV.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY INSCRIPTIONS ON STATION ISLAND—VOTIVE GIFTS TO ITS SANCTUARY—ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH REPLACES THE CAVE—BOAT ACCIDENTS, ESPECIALLY THAT OF 1795—PRIOR MURRAY—REVIEW OF THE PILGRIMAGE DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

EFERENCE has already been made to the inscribed stones, set for preservation in the southern gable of St. Patrick's Church on Station Island. Two of them, described at pages 55 and 57 of this work, bear the name of a Franciscan Friar, named Father Magrath, who, we may conjecture, was prior here in 1753. Those stones formerly marked the centre of two of the penal "beds" or circles, where crucifixes are now fixed; but, for their better preservation, they were placed in their present position. Side by side with them in the same wall is that ancient inscribed stone bearing the legend "OR MECI." In addition may be seen there another inscribed stone, having sculptured in relief on its face a cross, also a stag with branching antlers, which latter forms the heraldic device or arms of the O'Doherty family, and underneath the inscription :—

"YS HOUSE
was built Fr. Anth: Do
herty for ye use of
ye Conv: of Donegal
his age 68 ye 8 Sep:
A.D. 1763."

From the above inscription we may reasonably infer that Father Anthony O'Doherty of the Seraphic Order was prior here not only at the date mentioned, 1763, but also for many years about that period. From that interesting handbook, *South-Western Donegal,* we learn that this friar had in his possession one of the silver chalices formerly belonging to the Donegal Convent, where, as appears from Father Purcell's account, given in Meehan's *Franciscan Monasteries,* "there were sixteen silver chalices, all of which, two excepted, were washed with gold." On the chalice in question is the following inscription:—

"Fr. Ants. O'Doherty, S.T.D. procuravit
Hunc Calicem pro usu fratrum minorum
Sanctae nostrae fraternitatis
Conventus Dongaliensis."

As the Donegal Convent at this time supplied a large proportion of the priests who ministered to the Lough Derg pilgrims, we may infer that they brought with them each season the necessary vestments and altar plate, and hence we may take it that the chalice referred to had been used in the celebration of the Divine Mysteries on Lough Derg. In 1850 it was taken to America by the Rev. John Donnelly, whose native place adjoined the ancient churchyard of Aghalurcher, in Fermanagh. At his death it came into the possession of Rev. Edward M'Gowan of Penn Yann, who presented it to Monsignor Stephens of Killybegs, the author of the handbook above named.

Another of the Lough Derg chalices is that long preserved in use at Corduff chapel, parish of Carrickmacross. It was a votive offering made to the sanctuary of Lough Derg by a lady, named Clara Nugent, *alias* Cusack, of Carlanstown, in the county of Meath. She was closely

related to Dr. Thomas Dease, Bishop of Meath, whose mother was Lady Eleanor Nugent, of Carlanstown, a branch of the noble family of Delvin. How this chalice found its way to Corduff I cannot say, if it be not that the altar plate of Lough Derg was removed for better security, at the close of each station, to the episcopal residence, during the time when three of the bishops of Clogher found a secure abode within the faithful territory, or "Dominion," of Farney. This small silver chalice is of great beauty of workmanship, chaste in design, and of very graceful proportions. Its measurements are—Height, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.; diameter of cup, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.; pedestal, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. in diameter. On the upper part of the pedestal of this chalice a crucifix is inscribed; underneath it the following legend :—

"*Clara Nugent, als. Cusack de Carlanstown, pro Loghdarig me fieri fecit, 1721.*"

On the outside of the cup is inscribed indistinctly a harp, also a harp with crown. On the principle that *res clamat domino*, we venture to express a hope that these chalices may again be restored to the sanctuary of Lough Derg.

There are two other chalices at Lough Derg, which also deserve notice. They were the gift of a pious lady, Mrs. E. Kent, and though the year in which they were bestowed on this sanctuary is not named, yet the style of the inscriptions would show that they belong to the latter half of the last century. The inscription of chalice No. 1 runs thus :—

"Dedicated in Honr. of God
For our Blessed Lady's Chapple Loughdarrig:
pray for ye givers predecessors
husbands and posty.
E. KENT."*

* No. 1 chalice was for many years missing at Lough Derg, and all

No. 2 chalice bears the following inscription :—

"Dedicated in honr. of God for St.
Patrk's Chapple Loughdarrig ;. pray for ye
givers predecessors
husbands and posty.
E. KENT."

No. 1 is marked on inside of pedestal "12. 16."—and No. 2, "12. 19." which probably signifies their weight.

During the summer of 1878 another inscribed stone was discovered in the floor of one of the lodging houses on the island, and for its preservation, it, too, was set in the wall of St. Patrick's Church. Its inscription reads :—

"*Permissu Superiorum,*
Pro publico bono conditoris,
Antonius O'Flaherty.
A.D. 1763."

This Anthony O'Flaherty* was a descendant of the lordly

trace of it was supposed to be lost, when fortunately it was discovered in the County Derry, and restored to the island. On being returned it was found very much crushed and injured. Both have been lately repaired and regilt at the instance of the Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly.

* Mr. John Duffy from the district of Castlederg supplied the following information on Station Island, 9th August, 1880 :—

"Anthony was one of four brothers, two of whom entered the Church. The names of the latter were Neil and Michael, and they laboured for many years in the vineyard of the Lord in the parishes respectively of Termonamongan and Donaghmore. John, commonly called Manasses John, was a farmer, whilst Anthony adopted the profession of an architect ; and in that capacity superintended the erection of many of the churches in this part of Ulster, which were, in those primitive days of architecture in this country, regarded as models of excellence. As he was so engaged in 1763 it scarcely admits of a doubt that he is the '*Conditor*' mentioned on the slab. I would be inclined to believe that '*Conditor*' in this case means either the architect, or contractor, rather than the person who built the church at his own expense. A son of this Anthony, a centenarian, still lives in Ballybofey, and other relatives of his live in Aughyarren."

family of the O'Flahertys of H-Iar Connaught, who in the days of their power were benefactors of many a church and cloister. His immediate ancestors had settled in the parish of Termonamongan, to which parish he also belonged. It is evident he co-operated with the Prior, Father O'Doherty, in the erection of buildings on the island; and in requital for his services permission was given him to erect the above date-stone. What the buildings then erected were I cannot with any degree of certainty say. One of them in all likelihood was St. Mary's Church, which was replaced over fifty years later by a new structure. To this conclusion I am mainly led by a Map or Plan of the Island, and of St. Patrick's Purgatory, which I find in the *Antiquities of Ireland*, by Edward Ledwich (Dublin, 1790). Here we find "the church, or monastery," marked near the site of the present St. Mary's, but reaching more westerly. The date-stone of that old church was found in the walls of St. Mary's, taken down in 1870, to make room for the neat Gothic edifice, which now graces its site. The inscription, from which unfortunately the year is missing, certainly belongs to the last century. It may be seen in the gable of St. Patrick's; and it reads:—

"THIS CHAP:
WAS DEDI
CATED TO
YE: B:V:M:
OF ANGELS
& CONSECD.
JULY YE 20."

Clearly the church, of which the above was the date-stone, was erected by the Franciscan friars, as the title "Blessed Virgin Mary of Angels" has been always one of their favourite church names. Our conjecture is that the

above inscription was the *titulus* of the church erected by Friar Anthony O'Doherty; and that the stone first noticed in this chapter was erected in a wing attached to the church, and used as a dwelling by the officiating clergymen; whilst the inscription commemorating Anthony O'Flaherty may have marked an oratory or chapel raised by him over "St. Patrick's Altar,"* which, according to Hewson and others, stood at the northern end of Station Island.

The purgatorial cave down to the year 1780 was, according to Richardson, "10 feet distant from the church; it was 22 feet long, 2 feet 1 inch wide, and 3 feet high. It hath a bending within six feet of the far end, where there is a very small window, or spike-hole, to let in some light and air to the pilgrims that are shut up in it. There is little or none of it under ground, and it seems never to have been sunk deeper than the rock. It is built of stone and clay, huddled together, covered with broad stones, and all overlaid with earth." This cave was closed up about the year 1780 † by the prior, who considered it insufficient for the number of persons who sought admission to it. A new church, 72 feet long by 24 wide, called St. Patrick's Church, or "Prison Chapel," so called from the fact that it was intended to supersede and serve the purpose of the ancient purgatorial cave, was built about that time.

In 1776 this church was re-roofed and slated by the then prior, Father Murray. With the exception of the following additions and repairs, it is still substantially the same church as that erected in 1780. The Rev. Patrick Moyna added an aisle to it in 1835. In 1860 Rev. John

* It is called by Richardson the "Altar of Confession."

† The "Gazetteer of Ireland" referring to the Cave, says, "it was closed by Pope Alexander, by the Government in 1632, it was again opened in the reign of James II., and closed in 1780."

M'Kenna (now Canon M'Kenna, P.P., Pettigo,) remodelled it internally; and besides other very necessary improvements, he removed its galleries, which were approached by stone steps from the outside of the gables. Further extensive and substantial improvements and repairs were effected to it during the summer of 1878 by the present venerated Prior, Very Rev. Canon James M'Kenna, P.P., Aughavea, at a cost of £200.

During settled weather Lough Derg wears an aspect pleasing in the extreme. At times its waters lie hushed as if in sleep, and not a ripple disturbs its placid surface. Under such tranquil repose have I witnessed it at early morning in the beginning of August, 1876. The morning was exceptionally beautiful, the air fresh and clear, the sun reddening with his rising beams the mountains encircling the lake. Through the air rustled an indescribable harmony, as if all the fishes in the lake were chanting in chorus their matin melody. The crowing of chanticleer at some distant farmhouse anon broke like bugle-note upon the ear; and the whir of the moor-fowl through the heath also imparted life and variety to a scene unique and charming. Such solemn and impressive scenes* are not of rare incidence at Lough Derg; and they are well calculated to make deep and vivid impressions on the memory.

But though Lough Derg not rarely reveals itself

* A sunset on Lough Derg, under favourable circumstances, is, also, a spectacle of extraordinary grandeur. Such a sight have I witnessed from Station Island on 22nd July, 1878, between 8 and 9 o'clock, as the sun was going down behind Croagh-Breac. Its reflection in the lake looked like a massive pillar of gold, having its apex in Upper Lough Derg, and reaching down through the channel between Saints' Island and the mainland more than midway to Station Island. One might well imagine it to be the golden portal to some bright realm. The sight was one my companion had never before witnessed during his twenty-five years' connection with the place.

in such mild guise, it more frequently betrays a sterner mood, and lashes its well-worn shores in angry fashion. At times, indeed, does the tempest toss its waves in such fury, that we must regard it as due to a merciful Providence that more accidents have not occurred there; and this more particularly when we take into account not only the propinquity of the Atlantic, but eight or ten miles west of it, and the elevated and mountainous situation of the lake itself, but, also, the frail kind of craft which in bygone days used to ply upon its waters. During the time the religious establishment stood on Saints' Island no tradition survives of any boat accident having occurred, though the barks then in use were frail canoe-shaped boats, formed out of a hollowed tree, or coracles, covered with hides or canvas, such as are still in use on many of the islands off the coast of Ireland.

It is handed down that many years ago two priests went for a sail in a boat of this sort, and when but a short distance south of Station Island, where there is a round rock hidden under water (since called the "Priests' Rock"), the boat capsized, and its occupants were drowned. This is said to have been the first boat accident on Lough Derg.

Over sixty years since a second boat was lost between Saints' Island and the river Fluchlynn. The boatman, one Doherty from Aughkeen, was returning, in company with two or three others, from Kelly's Islands, in the month of March, when the boat, which was small and unsafe, capsized some distance from land, and all met with a watery grave, not even Doherty, skilful swimmer though he was, being able to escape. This sad accident inspired the muse of a local poetaster, who commemorated the event in a mournful lay, still sung in the locality.

But the most lamentable accident of all happened here in 1795, a catastrophe which for many years cast a gloom

over the place, and the recital of which to this day fails not to evoke from the pious pilgrims many a tear and prayer for those who met with such an untimely end. Sunday, 12th of July, 1795,* is a day long to be remembered in connexion with Lough Derg. On that morning, which set in fresh and breezy, but by no means stormy, there was from an early hour the usual hurry and bustle about the "cabin," or ferryhouse, amongst pilgrims and some of the neighbouring mountain residents, who were anxious to hear Mass on the island. A few boats had already taken their full complement of passengers to and fro, when the hour of eleven o'clock (the time at which the ill-fated boat left the ferry-quay for the island,) arrived. Johnston, the ferryman, had already allotted places to ninety-three passengers, all told, most of whom were pilgrims. It is said that some of the passengers took exception to the boat as being old and leaky, but their fears were made light of. A fortunate escape is related of a young man, a pilgrim, who had actually taken his seat in the boat, when his father summoned him back, as he had dreamt the previous night of some terrible fate about to befall his son, followed him to the lake, and thus saved him from certain death.

At the hour named, MacTeague, the principal boatman (who is said to have been under the influence of drink at the time), put off from shore, and all went well until they came alongside Friars' Island. It was then noticed that the boat had sprung a leak, and was fast taking in water.

The boatmen paid little heed to this, thinking they

* The Belfast *News-Letter* of 1796 has it: "A very melancholy accident happened in this kingdom in July last. A large boat containing 72 pilgrims was upset, only 2 saved out of all." I prefer taking the account given by the people of the locality, some of whom were eye-witnesses, as to the numbers lost and saved.

could make Station Island without any difficulty. As they reached, however, about midway between Friars' Island and Station Island, the water was fast gaining on the boat, to the alarm of the passengers, who became restive and uncontrollable. In the confusion and dismay that followed the boat capsized, and went down in about ten feet of water. Station Island, but especially the little wharf, or landing-place, was at the time crowded with spectators, who were so thunderstruck by the accident that they had not presence of mind to push off to the rescue, though a boat or two were within their reach, and though a dozen strokes of the oar might have brought a relief party to the rescue. If this had been done, many of the victims might have been saved. It is consoling to record that one of the priests then on the island ran to the shore and gave conditional absolution to those drowning, repeating aloud the formula of the same.

A few moments after the capsizing of the boat, a large mass of human beings, having grasped each other in the water with the tenacity of death, came to the surface, where they remained struggling for a little time, when they sank to rise no more. Out of the ninety-three passengers but three, and those three pilgrims, escaped. The boatmen were also lost, as well as those from the neighbourhood, who were going to hear Mass on the island.

The priests then on the island offered up Masses for the souls of the deceased; and Prior Murray, in a funeral address on the occasion, is stated to have declared that, had the accident happened on the return of the pilgrims from the island, more grounds for consolation would have been left to their bereaved and sorrowing relatives.

At the time the accident occurred, it is said Johnston, the ferryman, was engaged in giving tickets at the ferry-

house to a fresh batch of arrivals. He is reported to have made light of the matter, and to have said that it would by no means prevent the Station from proceeding as usual.

All the bodies of those drowned were recovered from their watery grave. Many of them were removed by their sorrowing friends to their family burial places. About twenty or more were interred on the highest part of Friars' Island, where a dense cluster of firs may now be seen waving their sombre plumes over their lonely grave. Others were buried in Templecarne graveyard, especially those who belonged to the locality. The sight of the dead bodies, as they were conveyed for sepulture over the mountain district, was most heartrending, and they who witnessed the spectacle (with some of whom I conversed), could never after refer to it without shuddering at the thought, and shedding copious tears.

We have seen that the old cave, or caves (there being at times two or more of them) were superseded about the year 1780, by a commodious church called St. Patrick's, which was erected not only to serve the purpose of the former *Caverna*, but also for general worship. Who built this church I do not well know unless it be the Rev. Fr. Murray P.P., Errigal-Truagh, who about this period became prior in room of the Franciscans, whose reduced numbers rendered them no longer equal to the work of the pilgrimage. Whether the church was erected by prior Murray, or not, it is certain that he repaired and slated it in 1776, the year after the boat accident. He is described as of a mild and gentle disposition, and with the close of the century his term of office as prior of the pilgrimage drew also to its close.

Towards the latter part of the eighteenth century the course of the penitential austerities practised at Lough Derg became considerably modified. The period of a

Station, which formerly occupied nine, or at least six days, was now reduced to three days; though cases are even yet not unfrequent where pilgrims remain on the island for six, or even nine days, repeating meanwhile the "Station" for different intentions. Besides, since the erection of St. Patrick's Church, confinement in this, the "prison" chapel, is not so rigidly enforced as was the incarceration in the "Cave" previously existing; although its duration still extends to twenty-four hours, *i.e.* from 6 p.m. of the first day to 6 p.m. of the next day, during which a strict vigil is to be kept.

Hewson says that in his time (1701), "There were many priests on the island, and each day they have a sermon preached in Irish about one o'clock." Richardson (1727) says there were twenty-four priests engaged there every station season. But this may be an exaggeration. Skelton says that in 1770 there were about 4,000 pilgrims annually frequenting this sanctuary; and he states that the pilgrims had then sufficient shelter and accommodation on the island. Immediately before the boat accident of 1795 the arrivals each season must have reached the high figure of between ten and fifteen thousand. That catastrophe, however, with other circumstances to be noticed hereafter, caused the influx of the pilgrims at the close of the century to become considerably reduced. Yet through all its vicissitudes the Holy Island still continued to be regarded with love and veneration by those of the Irish race, who, like our national poet, Moore, desired to visit

> "That dim lake,
> Where sinful souls their farewell take
> Of this vain world, and half-way lie
> In death's cold shadow ere they die."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PILGRIM TAX—THE FERRYMEN—MOST REV. DR. MURPHY'S REGULATIONS FOR THE PILGRIMAGE—RESCRIPT FROM ROME—ST. MARY'S CHURCH—THE PRESBYTERY—HOSTILE NOTICES OF THE PILGRIMAGE—PRIORS SINCE THE YEAR 1800—INFLUX OF PILGRIMS—T. D. M'GEE'S POEM, "LOUGH DERG."

OF the remnants of the feudal or penal laws, the tax, or tariff, which each Lough Derg pilgrim must pay to the "lord of the soil," is perhaps the most indefensible. Not content with the possession of the lands given as a perpetual endowment to this sanctuary, and of which it held undisputed ownership for over a thousand years, the Protestant bishops of Clogher, after doing their utmost (and failing,) to put a stop to the pilgrimage, conceived the idea of turning it to profitable account by exacting from each pilgrim a fine * for liberty to approach the shrine of his devotion.

* We take the following strictures from writers hostile to the pilgrimage. J. B. Doyle's *Tour in Ulster* (Dublin, 1854) has it:—"The lake is situated upon the estate of Mr. Leslie of Glasslough, County Monaghan, who derives £200 per year for the right of ferry. It has proved a profitable investment to those who have farmed it." And Barrow's *Tour Round Ireland in 1835* thus comments:—"But what is to be said of the proprietor, who raises a revenue of £200 or £300 a year by renting this spot? Does he never consider when he looks upon the objects that flock to this place from the extreme parts of the island, what pain and misery they undergo in their long journey? If he does, I should think the revenue he derives from such a source cannot afford him much gratification."

The more easily and effectively to collect this pilgrim tax, the ferry was rented at a fixed annual sum to a ferryman, who, after paying the landlord the stipulated amount, had to depend on the balance of the proceeds for his own behalf. The rent of the ferry generally rose or fell according to the number of pilgrims visiting the island; so that from the amount of rent imposed each year we might form a proximate estimate of the number of arrivals.

Towards the close of the last century a Protestant family, named Johnston, rented the ferry at £250 each year. About the beginning of this century one of those Johnstons, as we shall see, gave great dissatisfaction. After him a ferryman named Travers managed the ferry for about ten years.. Next came Robert Johnston, who rented it down to 1844. At this time Catholic ferrymen came into office, the first of whom was Daniel Campbell, who conducted the ferry in the year 1845. He was succeeded by his son, John Campbell. It was he who built the present ferryhouse, and also commenced the erection of a large inn on the island, which, however, was never completed. It next reverted to his brother, Peter Campbell; then to his brother, William, who held it down to the year 1862-3, when Thomas Flood of Pettigo got charge of it. He held it until 1876, when his brother Patrick (the present ferryman) secured his right in the ferry. The rent of the ferry was reduced for the Campbells to £150; and since then it has been still further reduced to £50, which is its present rent, yearly payable to the owner of Termon-Dabheoc, Sir John Leslie, Bart.

In order to make up the rent, a fine of 6½d. was formerly imposed on each pilgrim for the "right of way" to the island. Within living memory that charge of 6½d.

was never deviated from, down to the year 1868. In that year Thomas Flood, predecessor of the present ferryman, in view of two or three bad seasons, instead of applying to the landlord for a reduction in the ferry rent, waited upon the bishop of the diocese, requesting an increase in the charge for the ferry ticket, from 6½d. to 8d. After weighing all the circumstances, the bishop deemed the application not unreasonable, and to this day the charge for the ferry passage to and from the island remains at 8d. per ticket.

In May, 1778, Dr. James Murphy was appointed Coadjutor Bishop of Clogher, and on the death of Bishop Hugh O'Reilly (November 3rd, 1801), he succeeded to the mitre of Clogher *per Coadjutorium*. One of his first cares was to look after the administration of the pilgrimage of Lough Derg; and with that object he addressed a list of regulations to the prior, Father Bellew, and his principal assistant, the Rev. Peter M'Ginn. The document is headed:—"A few of the many regulations necessary for the orderly administration of the Station of Lough Derg," and bears date, "Tydavnet, May 26th, 1802." This document sets out with a regulation which for many years was strictly enforced and adhered to, but which is now obsolete; and it is as follows:—

"I hereby prohibit, under pain of suspension *ipso facto*, any confessor, already approved, or who may be approved of this season for Lough Derg, not excepting even the Prior himself, to receive the confession, give the absolution, or admit to the indulgence of the Station of Lough Derg, any pilgrim or penitent who has not complied with his Easter duty this year in his own parish, or who cannot produce a certificate signed by his own parish priest, or ordinary confessor, permitting him to be admitted to the benefit of said indulgence, though he has not complied with said Easter duty.

"And further, I hereby order, under the same pain of suspension, said certificate to be submitted to the Prior for his approbation of its authenticity before the bearer of it is admitted to confession," etc.

After other regulations regarding investing the pilgrims with cords, scapulars, and other religious badges; also with regard to the selling or blessing of such religious badges, etc., and likewise regarding the allocation and discharging of intentions for Masses received on the island, occurs the following regulation:—

"Fourthly—This regulation regards the teaching of the Catechism on the Island of Lough Derg."

And the communication thus concludes:—

"As these, however, or any other regulations that may be adopted, must prove useless if the Messrs. Johnston and their boatmen persevere in their monopolies and in their severities towards the clergy and stationers, you will take care to speak to and settle matters with them if you can; otherwise suspend the station *instanter*."

What the particular severities and monopolies here complained of against the Johnstons were, I have not learned; but I heard that they established "patterns" at the shore of the lake, where music, dancing, and drinking were introduced, thus tending to bring the place into disrepute, and causing great annoyance and scandal. Father Bellew, however, grappled at once with the difficulty, put a stop to those "patterns," and by his energy and prudence upheld the discipline and order of the pilgrimage. Unlike the first of those Johnstons, who was so harsh and severe towards the pilgrims, and who is said to have admitted to the island all visitors indiscriminately, against the orders

and remonstrances of the prior, the last of the Johnston ferrymen, namely Robert Johnston, was both courteous towards the pilgrims and amenable to the wishes of the prior.

With regard to the admission of visitors, the rule at present observed is—that visitors be furnished with written permission from the prior before the ferryman is at liberty to land them on the island. The reasonableness of the rule will be apparent to all when they consider how limited is the area of the island, how much both priests and pilgrims are occupied with their respective duties, and how much frequent visits of that sort might tend to interrupt and distract the devotional exercises of the pilgrims.

One of Dr. Murphy's regulations, as we have seen, enjoined the teaching of the Catechism on the island. For that purpose two catechists were retained here for many years, one of whom taught the Irish Catechism, the other the English Catechism. Besides instructing the rude and illiterate in their Christian doctrine, they lent valuable aid to the clergy in helping to prepare and dispose the pilgrims for the sacraments. In addition to these were the Prior's Clerk, and also the Director of Devotions, whose special duty it was to maintain order during the night of the "prison," or vigil.

Early in the year 1805 Bishop Murphy applied to the Holy See for a renewal of the usual faculties and indulgences vouchsafed to this pilgrimage, to be available for the space of fifteen years. Cardinal Jugnani, Secretary of the Sacred Office, sent a rescript to Dr. Murphy, bearing date the 16th March, 1805, and bearing likewise the signature of *Dominicus Archiepus Myran. Secretarius.* From this we subjoin the extracts bearing on our subject:—

"*Tam vero supplicem libellum Amplitudinis tuæ nomine*

R. P. Magister Lucas Concanen, Ordinis Praedicatorum, ad nos detulit, quo postulabas, ut indulgentiæ ad quindennium pro stationibus peregrinationis, quæ Purgatorium Sti. Patritii appellatur, impertitæ, ad aliud quindennium renoventur. At quoniam in Archivis hujusce S. Congregationis codicibus ejusmodi concessionis indicium nullum repertum est, exemplum rescripti alias impetrati, in quo dies, mensis, et annus concessionis adnotatus sit ad nos mittere ne gravere, ut ad illius normam indulgentiarum renovationem obtinere valeamus. Eo exemplo eo magis indigemus, quod in tua istius diœcesis relatione nobis significaveris, quibus conditionibus indulgentiæ acquirantur, non dissimulans ab aliquibus hujusmodi pii exercitii praxim fuisse improbatam. Visum est etiam nobis circuitiones quasdam, nisi probabiles earum causæ afferantur, posse jure meritoque notari : præsertim cum non modo pedibus, sed cruribus etiam nudis fieri in more sit positum ; quod si a fidelibus utriusque sexus fiat, timendum est ne aliquod inde scandalum oriatur. . . . Quod si forte in ista Sti. Patritii peregrinatione ejusmodi abusus irrepserit, tuæ partes erunt omni studio ac contentione eosdem eliminare ne mala potius quam bona a tali peregrinatione exoriantur.*" . . . .

From the foregoing rescript we can understand with what vigilance the authorities in Rome had watched over this sanctuary, and how the report (perhaps gratuitous and groundless), which had reached them of the pilgrims here making the circuits of the "beds" on their bare knees, had been inquired after and corrected. After Dr. Murphy had satisfied the Sacred Office with the required information, the indulgences postulated for were granted. And when the same bishop applied a second time in 1814 † for their renewal, they were also conceded, as we

* Father Luke Concanen, to whom reference is made in this rescript, was the first Bishop of New York. When in Rome he acted as agent to the Irish bishops, and lived in the Dominican convent attached to the Church of *Santa Maria sopra Minerva.*

† In this connection it may not be out of place to give the following

can infer from the form of postulation on that head, presented to the Holy Father in 1870, a copy of which, together with a copy of the Papal Indult, shall be given later on.

The church erected by Father O'Doherty in 1763 was taken down in 1813, and a new church, also called St. Mary's, erected a little to the east of it by the Rev. Patrick Bellew, then prior, afterwards parish priest of Monaghan and Dean of Clogher. In 1835 the Rev. Prior Moyna, enlarged this church by the erection of an aisle, the contractor for the improvements then effected being the late Daniel Campbell, builder, Pettigo. This church underwent additional repairs in 1860; and in 1870 it was found necessary to have it entirely taken down, when it was replaced by a very substantial and handsome Gothic edifice, erected through the exertions of the present worthy prior. St. Mary's, thus erected after the design, and by the exertions of Canon M'Kenna, and solely with the aid of voluntary contributions of the pilgrims, was dedicated in August, 1870, the year in

extract from the diary of Dr. Michael Blake, bishop of Dromore, as found in a notice of his life from the pen of Rev. M. Russell, S.J., in the *Irish Monthly* for 1882:—

"1825, April 25.- I received to-day a letter from the Right Rev. Dr. Kernan, dated Carrickmacross, April 5. In it he requests that I apply to His Eminence Cardinal della Somaglia, for a continuance of the indulgence granted to the Island of Lough Derg, to which hundreds of Catholics flock every year with the express permission and approbation of their respective pastors, and after having complied with their Paschal duty, in order to do penance and make a retreat of three, six, or nine days. The island being the property of a Colonel Leslie, M.P., it is feared that, were the Station to be suspended for one year, he would not allow access to it. The present superior of it is the Rev. M. Bellew, the bishop's Vicar-general and Dean of the Chapter of Clogher, under whose superintendence it is morally impossible that any abuse can happen. The Station commences on the 1st of June and terminates on the 15th of August."

which it was erected, by the Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly. To those who have admired this pretty little church, with the campanile and bell hard by, erected at the same time, it will afford surprise that all cost but little over £500. In St. Mary's Church are located a number of confessionals, where the officiating priests labour for the greater part of each day in the sacred and sublime work of reconciling sinners to God. To that sacred use and purpose the church is almost entirely devoted.

The Presbytery, which was a substantially built and commodious house, was erected by Prior Bellew in 1816. It was afterwards, in 1860, considerably remodelled internally; and finally, in 1864, it was in great part rebuilt by the present Very Rev. Prior, at the cost of £164.

If it be a mark of the sanctity of a place to be made the constant object of attack by heretical and infidel writers, then surely must Lough Derg, independent of any other reason, be regarded as very holy, inasmuch as never yet was there an institution more bitterly and more persistently assailed than this pilgrimage. Misrepresentation, calumny, invective, ridicule, and all other artifices have been employed against this retreat of Catholic piety. Besides the many charges levelled against it, most of which might with equal force be directed against any Catholic practice or place of Catholic worship throughout the world, Richardson, and others after him, have devised a new and ingenious objection, showing the loss of time and waste of money, both to the individual and to the State, by the toleration of this pilgrimage. The objection only shows with what spirit the enemies of pilgrimages are inspired, who would, forsooth, make temporal concerns of more paramount importance than those spiritual interests, which the pious pilgrim so anxiously labours to compass.

During the present century Lough Derg was resorted to by writers of that class, whose object seemed to be none other than to gratify the prejudices of the enemies of our holy religion, by representing in the darkest colours this time-honoured retreat. Principal amongst this class stand the Rev. Cæsar Otway, and his *protége*, Carleton.*

William Carleton himself had been in his early days an aspirant to the priesthood. Being foiled in this, and failing to obtain from Bishop Murphy an appointment to one of the diocesan burses in College, he placed himself under the patronage of Cæsar Otway, and thenceforth devoted his versatile talents to ridicule not only the foibles and peculiarities of an untutored peasantry, but even the religious customs and practices of Irish Catholics.† Born in the townland of Kilnahussoge, parish of Clogher, in 1795, he came as a pilgrim to Lough Derg in 1820. Of

* The former in his *Sketches in Donegal*, the latter in his *Lough Derg Pilgrim*.

† In relation to my strictures on Carleton in the first edition, published in 1879, the following letter from the distinguished Maynooth professor, the late Dr. Murray, will be of interest:—

"Clones, August 25th, 1879.

"Dear F. O'Connor,

I on yesterday entirely forgot communicating some very interesting information regarding William Carleton, and in reference to the L. Derg tale -information of which I am now the only living repository, having had it partly from his own lips, partly from his old school-fellow, F. James Smith. There can be no doubt that grave abuses existed in those old days. The great blemish in the tale is from the '*suppressio veri*,' and the paragraphs written, not by Carleton himself, but by Cæsar Otway. I will, before you come to a second edition, think of some way by which your censure of Carleton may be, not withdrawn, but softened.

Yours faithfully, P. Murray."

Unfortunately death called away the great Master before the information could be obtained; and, unless it can be found among his posthumous papers, it is now beyond the hope of recovery.

that journey he wrote a very ludicrous account in which he himself figures as the *Lough Derg Pilgrim*. Cæsar Otway, it is averred, retouched the tale, supplied not only its colouring, but much new matter, and had it published at his own expense.

Another writer, Mr. Inglis, takes a most ultra-Protestant view of the pilgrimage in his *Journey throughout Ireland in 1834*. In a like strain writes Philip Dixon Hardy in his *Holy Wells of Ireland* (Dublin, 1836), who by his pencil not less than by his pen has left behind him a very poor caricature of the place. Wright's *Saint Patrick's Purgatory* (London, 1844), abounds in bigotry from beginning to end. Similar was the tone of Barrow, Doyle, and other tourists of a like class, who came here with preconceived prejudices.

Of the notices of Lough Derg written by Protestants, the account of it in *Household Words* for October, 1852, is an honourable exception. At first it was surmised that Charles Dickens had been the author of it, and that he visited the island in person. The authorship of the article is, however, now generally conceded to Allingham, the poet. His description of the pilgrimage is impartial and favourable; he praises Prior Moyna's discourses as learned and practical, and he bestows a fitting eulogium on the deep piety and devotion of the pilgrims.

In the year 1829 Father Bellew was prior for the last time. After him came Father Boylan, who subsequently became P.P. of Enniskillen and Dean of Clogher. He held the office of Prior for two years, and was succeeded in 1831 by the Rev. Patrick Moyna, who continued as prior for about twenty-nine years. The Very Rev. Canon Edward M'Kenna, P.P., Dromore, succeeded Father Moyna in 1858, and, with but slight interruptions, administered the office for twenty years. The Very Rev. Canon James

M'Kenna has now for many years worthily presided over the pilgrimage as prior.

During the present century many illustrious pilgrims and visitors have been to Lough Derg. Foremost amongst them may be recorded the following prelates—Dr. Patrick M'Gettigan, bishop of Raphoe; Dr. Durcan, bishop of Achonry; Dr. M'Loughlin, bishop of Derry; Dr. Kilduff, bishop of Ardagh; Most Rev. Daniel M'Gettigan, Archbishop of Armagh; and in addition the successive bishops of Clogher, in whose diocese the sanctuary is situated, and who periodically made a canonical visitation of the Island. Besides those distinguished prelates, a large number of the clergy of Ireland, and not a few from other countries also, have made during this century a pilgrimage to Lough Derg, some even choosing it as the place of their annual ecclesiastical retreat. Members, likewise, of the various religious orders within the three kingdoms visit this sanctuary time after time, and express their great admiration, not only at the earnest piety and penitential spirit evinced by the pilgrims, but also at the order, regularity and efficiency with which the devotional exercises of the Station are conducted. It may interest our readers to learn that, in 1875, Father Dalgairns, who under God was instrumental in converting the Marquis of Ripon, came on a visit to Lough Derg, and there caused prayers to be offered up for the conversion of a distinguished statesman, whose name, though not communicated by him, soon after became known by the event.

The bright example of penance and humility, as shown by those pious ecclesiastics, who passed through the curriculum of this Station, gave great edification to the lay pilgrims, and conduced to swell the stream of arrivals at this venerable shrine. During the first half of the present century the number of pilgrims visiting Lough Derg far

exceeded the average of recent years. From the year 1800 down to 1824 the average yearly number was about 10,000. The late Mr. Edward Nicholson of Beechhill, Derry, assured me that on the occasion of his first visit in 1824 there were 1,100 pilgrims on the same night in "Prison" Chapel. From various accounts we infer that the number of pilgrims in 1824 must have exceeded 15,000. Mr. Inglis, in the *Gazetteer of Ireland* tells us that in 1834 the number of arrivals reached a total of 19,000.* In the beginning of the famine years there arrived in a single day the extraordinary number of 1,300 pilgrims, the greatest number of arrivals witnessed at Lough Derg on any day within this century. And we are told that during that year the total number of pilgrims could not have been much under 30,000. In those years from twelve to fifteen priests were daily engaged in hearing the confession of the pilgrims, and attending to the other Station duties.

Since 1846† there has been a gradual decline in the arrivals each year down to 1870. For this falling off in point of numbers various reasons can be assigned; foremost amongst these being the famine of '47, the subsequent years of distress, and the consequent depopulation of our country by famine, pestilence and emigration. Another cause for the diminution may be the multiplied facilities for missions and retreats throughout Ireland; and perhaps to some extent the lessened fervour of the faithful.

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* "I was assured that during the last year (1834) the number of persons, who had taken what is called their 'rounds' at the Purgatory, was between nineteen and twenty thousand."—See Barrow's *Tour Round Ireland.*

† Very Rev. Canon James M'Kenna informed me that in 1856, his first year on the island, 10,000 pilgrims had made the Station; and seven Confessors were in attendance during that season.

The suspension of the Station in 1860, while repairs were being made to the churches on the island, the rebuilding of St. Mary's in 1870, and the subsequent buildings and repairs executed within the Station period may have, likewise, had some effect in diminishing the number of pilgrims.

In latter years the numbers have been steadily increasing. Since 1872 between 3,000 and 4,000 annually perform the Station here.

In an admirable guide book just published, named *Bundoran and its Neighbourhood* * (Dublin, 1895), the writer, otherwise generally accurate, falls into the mistake of stating that "about 500 pilgrims visit Lough Derg annually." Had he said 5,000, he would have been much nearer the truth. The annexed statistical table, giving the number of pilgrims annually for a period of some thirty years, together with the names of the priests each year in attendance, must put this question beyond further doubt:—

Year.	No. of Pilgrims.	Names of the Clergy Officiating.
1866	3,401	Revs. E. M'Kenna (Prior), James M'Kenna, John M'Ardle, Peter Byrne.
1867	2,582	James M'Kenna, Thomas Smollen, Ter. M'Ardle.
1868	2,331	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, R. Owens.
1869	2,428	Ed. M'Kenna, James M'Kenna, D. O'Connor.
1870	2,882	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, R. Owens.
1871	3,293	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, Jos. Woods, Jas. M'Quaide.
1872	3,683	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, Jos. Woods, Patk. Hackett.
1873	3,012	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, Jos. Woods, P. Hackett.
1874	2,437	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, P. Hackett, Felix Hackett.
1875	2,122	Ed. M'Kenna, Jas. M'Kenna, F. Hackett, P. Hackett.
1876	3,196	Ed. M'Kenna, D. O'Connor, Felix and P. Hackett.
1877	3,305	Jas. M'Kenna, Jos. Woods, John F. Maguire.
1878	3,231	Jas. M'Kenna, D. O'Connor, Wm. Downey (Dio. Cashel), P. Callan.

* The publication in question is sure to become an indispensable *Vade Mecum*, and a treasured *souvenir* to those who visit that delightful region.

1879	1,765	Jas. M'Kenna, John M'Mahon, D. O'Connor.
1880	2,496	Jas. M'Kenna, J. M'Mahon, D. O'Connor.
1881	2,222	Jas. M'Kenna, J. M'Mahon, Thos. Gallagher, P. M'Vicar.
1882	3,097	Jas. M'Kenna, Thos. Gallagher, P. M'Vicar, P. Smyth, P. O'Neill.
1883	2,813	Jas. M'Kenna, P. M'Vicar, Jos. Woods, Eug. M'Kenna.
1884	3,188	Prior, Ed. Loughrey (Dio. Derry), P. M'Vicar, J. Maguire, A. M'Lerney.
1885	2,444	Prior, Eug. M'Kenna, Ed. Loughrey, Alex. M'Lerney.
1886	2,016	Prior, Maurice Brew (Dio. Cloyne), Ed. Loughrey.
1887	2,742	Prior, Phil. M'Ginity, Fras. Timoney.
1888	2,852	Prior, M'Ginity, Timoney, P. M'Cabe.
1889	3,068	Prior, Timoney, P. Keown, Ed. Loughrey.
1890	3,124	Prior, Laur. Kieran, M'Ginity, P. M'Donald.
1891	2,944	Prior, M'Ginity, Keown, Jas. O'Hanlon (Dio. Birmingham, England), and Rev. F. Price, ditto.

Of the Lough Derg pilgrims the great majority are Irish, or of Irish extraction. A great many come from America, many from England and Scotland, and not a few from Australia, New Zealand, and the other distant colonies, in a word from wherever the exiled Celt has found a foothold. The sanctuary of Lough Derg would seem to be a central meeting-place for the Irish, whither they journey from the most distant regions, to renew themselves in the faith and virtues so characteristic of their race, and to keep vigil, to fast and pray at the "Holy Island." Occasionally pilgrims of foreign nationalities kneel before the shrine and pour forth their prayers in strange tongues. The devotions are now conducted in the English language, yet before this sanctuary many a prayer is still offered up in "the sweet-tongued language of the Gael."

Instances are numerous, where persons, drawn by the holy attractions of the place, repeat the pilgrimage year after year. Mr. Nicholson, already mentioned, came here annually for fifty-six years. A worthy Belfast man, Mr. Henry, with an organised band of pilgrims, made a yearly pilgrimage for at least fifty years. Many others will be met with who have been there twenty or thirty

times; and of each year's arrivals it may be said that about one-third of the number had been to the island previously. This has its obvious advantage, inasmuch as there are found in each batch of arrivals persons who are familiar with the Station exercises, and who in turn are capable of guiding the inexperienced throughout. Just as in former years, men still constitute the majority of the pilgrims. While persons of every class, age and condition in life may here be found performing with the greatest humility its devotional exercises; it is also noteworthy that those who have once made the pilgrimage, leave the island with the lively desire of one day returning, and tasting again those sweet pleasures of soul, which the Station, albeit the apparent severity of its exercises, occasions. Those thoughts are beautifully expressed in the following poem by T. D'Arcy M'Gee, who made a pilgrimage to Lough Derg in 1848, at the time when his friend, C. Gavan Duffy, was in prison. As the poem entitled "Lough Derg" is one of the gems of its literature, I here gladly insert it:—

I.

"In a girdle of green, heathy hills,
In song-famed Donegal,
An islet stands in a lonely lake,
(A coffin in a pall),
A single stunted chestnut tree
Is sighing in the breeze,
While to and fro "the Pilgrims" flit
Or kneel upon their knees;
Down to the shore, from North and East,
From Antrim and the Rosses,
Come barefoot pilgrims, men and maids,
Through water-ways and mosses;
And some from Dublin City, far,
Where sins grow thick as berries,
From Sligo some, and Castlebar,
Come crossing by the ferries.

II.

Oh ! blessed Isle, a weary wight,
In body and in spirit,
Last year amid your pious ranks
Deplored his deep demerit;
And though upon his youth had fall'n
A watchful tyrant's ban,
Though sorrow for the unfought fight
And grief for the captive man,*
Peopled his soul like visions
That cloud a crystal sleep,
These sorrows there pass'd from him,
'Twas his sins that made him weep.
And forth he went, confess'd, forgiven,
Across the heathy hills,
His peace being made in heaven,
He laugh'd at earthly ills.

III.

Oh ! holy Isle, a ransom'd man
On a far distant shore,
Still in his day-dreams and his sleep
Sits by the boatman's oar ;
And crosses to your stony beach
And kneels upon his knees,
While overhead the chestnut-tree †
Is sighing in the breeze ;
And still he hears his people pray
In their own old Celtic tongue,
And still he sees the unbroken race
From Con and Nial sprung ;
And from departing voices hears
The thankful hymn‡ arise—
That hymn will haunt him all his years,
And soothe him when he dies.

* C. G. Duffy.

† This is in reality a sycamore tree, and being the only tree or shrub on Station Island, it consequently attracts some attention. It is very old, probably two or three centuries at least, and very much weather-beaten. A dense canopy of stunted branches shows where its former growth was arrested, until being nourished by additional soil it sent forth a fresh cluster of branches, which thus forms a protecting shelter for its aged trunk and its original canopy of foliage.

‡ Meaning the "Farewell Hymn to Lough Derg" sung at the departure of each boat from the Island.

IV.

Oh, would you know the power of faith,
  Go ! see it at Lough Derg ;
Oh, would you learn to smile at Death,
  Go ! learn it at Lough Derg ;
A fragment fallen from ancient time,
  It floateth there unchanged,
The Island of all Islands,
  If the whole wide world were ranged.
There mournful men and thoughtful girls
  Sins from their souls unbind ;
There thin gray hairs and childish curls
  Are streaming in the wind ;
From May till August, night and day,
  There praying pilgrims bide—
Oh, man hath no such refuge left,
  In all the world wide !"

CHAPTER XVII.

ROUTES TO LOUGH DERG — THE PROJECT OF A SHOOTING LODGE — THOUGHTS OF THE PILGRIM ON NEARING THE LAKE—LITHOGRAPHIC VIEWS OF THE ISLAND—THE STATION SEASON—AUTHORISED RELIGIOUS EXERCISES OF THE PILGRIMAGE—EXPLANATORY REMARKS ON THOSE DEVOTIONS—MOST REV. DR. DONNELLY PETITIONS THE HOLY SEE FOR INDULGENCES—COPY OF THE PAPAL INDULT.

UCH hardship and suffering must have in former times attended a pilgrimage to Lough Derg, especially when we bear in mind that pilgrims journeyed thither on foot, and in many cases barefoot,* from the most distant parts of the kingdom. Taking into account, however, the facilities for travelling nowadays available, the journey itself can no longer be regarded as little more than an agreeable holiday excursion.

There are three different routes by which pilgrims may reach Lough Derg. The first starts from the town of Donegal; and, after proceeding for some miles by a good county road, the pilgrim enters upon a mountain track, leading directly to the lake, past the western side of Aughkeen mountain, and reaches the shore at a headland close to Saints' Island, known in Island *parlance* as

* At present pilgrims but rarely divest themselves of their boots before reaching Station Island. In the memory of the older among us the case was quite different, as the rigour of the Station penance was supposed to commence at the very outset of the journey.

"the Donegal Point." Many of the sons and daughters of "old Tyrconnell" come by this route; while others of them, less observant of ancient usage, prefer the round-about way by car to Pettigo.

Some years since it was in contemplation to run a boat at appointed times, for the greater convenience of the Donegal pilgrims, to the mouth of the river Fluchlynn. This would effect a saving to them of three miles across a difficult stretch of moorland, and would lessen to that extent their journey to or from Donegal. Should the number of arrivals from that quarter at any time warrant it, the project is quite feasible and can be put in operation.

The second of the Lough Derg routes wends its way from Castlederg, past Killeter, on through the district of Aughyarren, and terminates at the "Cabin," or ferry-house. Most of the pilgrims from the Counties of Derry, Tyrone, and part of Donegal come by this route, which has been much enhanced by the opening in 1885 of the Victoria Bridge and Castlederg Tramway. The description of the new line, prefixed to its time-table, and written by the late Rev. Fr. M'Loughlin, P.P., Termonamongan, leaves nothing to add. He writes:—

"What was a matter of peril and much labour in the Middle Ages is easy of access at the present day. The Castlederg and Victoria Bridge Tramway, which is in connection with the rail-road from Derry, will convey the Lough Derg pilgrims to Castlederg, a distance of ten Irish miles from the shore of the lake. The road from Castlederg to Killeter, and for four miles further, passes through the valley of the Derg, and the rich alluvial lands skirting that river, and proceeds through undulating moorlands, remarkable for scenery. A new road, a mile and a half long, has been lately constructed, which will lead the pilgrims to within a few hundred yards of the lake.

The entire road from Castlederg is quite level and kept in first class order. To such as come from Derry this will shorten the distance at least thirty miles, and will be found much cheaper than the old route by the Bundoran Junction. For economy of time and money, and for its grand scenery, I should be glad to see this route adopted by all who visit Lough Derg from most of the Northern Counties."

The third and principal approach to Lough Derg is the road leading from Pettigo to the lake. Nearly all the pilgrims, coming by train or car, journey by this route. At present a good county road approaches the lake. It is kept in very good repair, and vehicles of every description can easily speed along its level, well-graded surface. But it was not always so. Until about thirty years since the county road stopped short abruptly fully a mile from the lake, and the pilgrim was left to trudge the remainder of his way over a boggy track, the condition of which in wet weather baffles description. Though quite outside the sphere of his duty, the prior during those years used every effort to keep this track passable, by having the flooded parts drained, and by causing bundles of heath to be scattered over its quagmires and ruts. At length, however, after long intervals, and by bits and snatches, the roadway has been macadamised to the water's edge, so that no further grievance on that score any longer exists.

It will interest all who purpose visiting Lough Derg to know that "cheap excursion tickets, in some instances at single fare for the double journey, marked 'Lough Derg tickets,' and available for return for eight days, can be had at all the principal stations of the Irish Great Northern railway system."

On the arrival of each train at Pettigo, cars will be found in waiting to convey without any delay the pilgrims

to the lake; and they will find it to their own interest and convenience to make no break in their journey, but to proceed without interruption to Station Island. The last available train reaches Pettigo about 7.40 p.m., thus leaving nearly two hours of daylight still remaining for the pilgrims to reach the Island, where they will find for the night as good accommodation as any that can be supplied in the neighbouring towns, and it may be added, at considerably less cost, besides being removed from the dangers and distractions of those towns.

Nearing the lake by the route from Pettigo, the visitor will discern a fine plantation of firs, skirting the roadway for some distance. Those trees planted in 1847, together with some of the islands afforested in the same year, tend to relieve the surrounding scene of much of its stern aspect. Thus, where eagles and wild geese (as Richardson states,) used to abound over a century ago, the sweet notes of the feathered songsters of the grove may now be heard.

Upon a spur of mountain within the area of this fir plantation, the landlord made preparations some twenty years since to erect a Shooting Lodge. Beyond constructing an avenue (branching off to the left from the Lough Derg road,) to its site, and sinking its foundations, the lodge remains *in statu quo*.

A common impression prevails in the locality that it was at one time the fixed intention of the landlord to convert Station Island itself into a shooting lodge. Be that as it may, the following narrative will tend to show not only his designs upon the place, but also the successful manner in which those designs were counteracted by the prior, acting under the guidance of his bishop. We have already seen that 1846 was remarkable for the vast numbers that came crowding to the Island. The accommodation for such numbers proving altogether inadequate,

the ferryman Campbell asked for and obtained from Prior Moyna a site for building a large inn, and forthwith commenced its erection. When the masonry was half completed, and a sum of £100 expended upon it, Mr. John Cunningham, then newly appointed agent to the Leslie estates, came upon the scene in 1847. He required Campbell to enter into an agreement with him for the site at a nominal rent, and, in the event of refusal, threatened to prevent his ferrying material for the building across the lake. Campbell at the instance of the prior refused. So the building was discontinued and never after completed. Until 1870 it remained standing to the right of the passage from the boat-quay to St. Mary's, when it was taken down and its site converted into an open space in front of the church. Mr. Cunningham, however, was a person not easily to be outdone. He immediately began to treat with the cabin-keepers on the island, who, by the way, were his tenants on the mainland, asking them to agree to incorporate their interests in the island cabins with those of their holdings on the mainland, and to have both cabin and farm included in one rent receipt. He likewise proposed reinstating them as tenants of their island cabins at one shilling per year each. They all replied, they could not agree to those terms without the sanction of the prior. Claiming as usual an estate in the land of the island, he summoned them to his office a second time, and threatened, if they did not submit to his will, that he would evict them from their farms on the mainland. They again refused unless the prior would give his sanction. One of their number, William Mulligan, soon afterwards sold to Mr. Cunningham for the sum of £12 his interest in his island cabin. Mr. Cunningham let it to one Robert Muldoon, whose occupation of it was rendered profitless, as the prior interdicted it on the spot.

Eventually, however, it was granted by the prior to the succeeding ferryman, as an accommodation.

The prior, fully informed of those manœuvres on the part of Mr. Cunningham, lost no time in communicating with the bishop, Most Rev. Dr. M'Nally. That great prelate proved himself fully equal to the emergency. He directed the prior, in the event of the cabin-keepers yielding to the demands of the agent, to close the Station forthwith. Relations continued thus strained until 1853, when the bishop considered it his duty to make a formal visitation of the island. Vested with the *insignia* of his office, and accompanied by the prior and another priest as witnesses, he entered each cabin, and demanded and obtained possession from each cabin-keeper. He immediately re-instated them at an annual rent of one penny each, which rent was afterwards increased to one shilling per year, the amount still payable.

Ever since, that rent has been paid each year by the ferry-man as well as by the rest of the cabin-keepers, and formal rent receipts in the bishop's name given to each of them for now close on fifty years. The present worthy prior assures me that he discharged the duty of collecting those rents, and tendering those cabin-keepers the receipts in the bishop's name, as the deputy of the then prior, in 1856, and the three succeeding years. As we shall see later on, this prompt action on the part of Dr. M'Nally stood the island in good stead in after years.

The feelings of the pilgrim, when a sudden turn in the road brings him within view of the lake and of Station Island, may be better imagined than described. The sentiment is thus expressed by a correspondent in a letter to the *Freeman* of 30th July, '83:—

"The sensation one feels on first beholding this venerable sanctuary is something awfully sublime, and one never to be

forgotten. The gentlemen of our party simultaneously, and as it were by common impulse, raise their hats to mark their feelings of veneration."

On nearing the ferry-cabin may be witnessed some such spectacle as that referred to by Inglis, a writer by no means friendly to the pilgrimage: "As I descended towards the shore of the lake, I could see that the island was entirely covered with persons, and on the bank I found upwards of two hundred pilgrims waiting to be ferried over. They were generally respectably dressed; some were sitting, some lying on the grass; some, more impatient, were standing close to the water, waiting the arrival of the ferry-boat; and some, more impatient still, had been warmed into devotion by the distant view of the holy place, and were already on their knees."

The large pilgrims' boat, appropriately called the "St. Patrick,"* manned by steady and experienced boatmen, and capable of accommodating about sixty pilgrims, can make the passage from the ferry-house to the Island, a distance of nearly a statute mile, in ten or twelve minutes. There is a smaller boat on the ferry named the "St. Brigid," and a third called the "St. Columba."

When the pilgrims arrive on the island, they proceed to the hospice, or to the cabins, which are six in number, and there they divest themselves of shoes and hats, in order to perform the station, as prescribed by ancient usage, both barefoot and bareheaded.

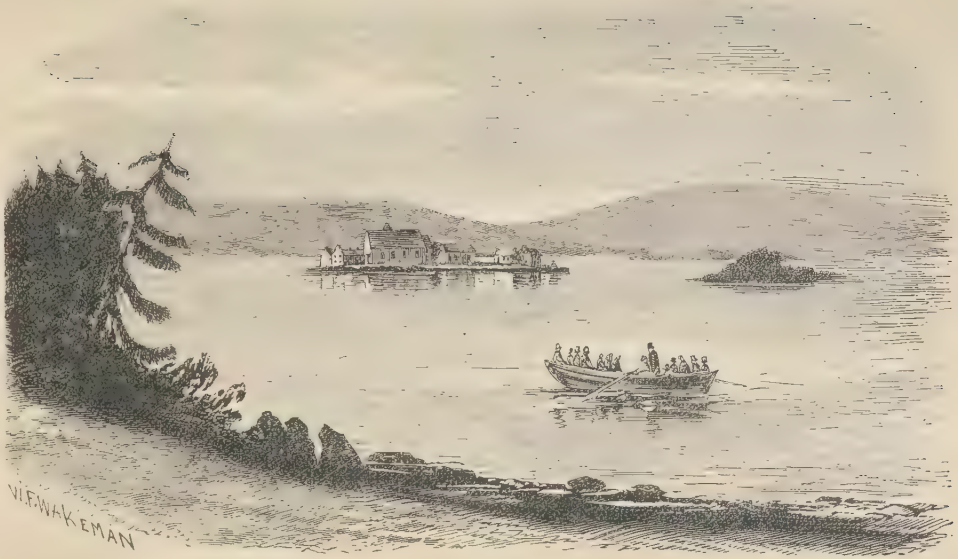
Station Island is in length 126 yards; in its broadest part 45, and in its narrowest 22 yards across. In the summer of 1871 Mr. Edward Nicholson (already referred

* A former P.P. of Aghabog, Rev. B. Duffy, took to himself the credit of having christened this boat, or rather its predecessor, with the blessing prescribed for such in the Ritual.

to), then of Manchester, obtained permission to take a sketch of the island, and to have at his own expense lithographic prints of it struck off. The work was executed in 1873 by the firm of MacGregor & Co., Manchester. The lithographs, together with the lithographic blocks, were presented by Mr. Nicholson to the bishop of the diocese, for the benefit of the island. The sketch in question, copies of which are procurable on the island, is furnished with a reference table in the margin, which serves the triple purpose of a map, guide, and pictorial representation of Station Island. It represents, though in a fanciful and embellished way, the two churches on the island, St. Patrick's and St. Mary's; the Campanile; St. Patrick's Cross; the penitential beds, or oratories, dedicated to Saints Dabheoc, Molaise, Columba, Catherine, Brendan and Brigid; the stations at the water; the presbytery; the six cabins; and the boat-quay. Even the solitary sycamore* (the arms of which in pre-campanile days served the purpose of a belfry,) is accurately delineated on the drawing. Mr. William Wakeman also published a fine water colour sketch of Station Island, taken in 1876, showing the pilgrims' boat on its passage; and again, in 1882, he took a very accurate sketch of it, his point of view being Friars' Island. In this sketch the new Hospice for pilgrims is clearly outlined.

It would appear that the Station season at Lough Derg during the last century opened on the 1st of May, and

* That there were some trees on the island during the last century, on that part of it now occupied by the Presbytery, would appear from the plate of the island to be found in Ledwich's *Antiquities of Ireland*. And before him Rev. Mr. Hewson, writes:—"Some few small trees, and a large one, half withered" (evidently this is the present solitary sycamore.) "are about the ruins, and fifteen small huts in the nearer end of the island for the reception of pilgrims."



Lough Derg.

closed on the 15th August. This would seem to have been the Station season at least since the closing of the cave in 1497. During the present century, however, the station opened on 1st of June and closed on the 15th of August. In 1869 the time was still further limited from 1st of July to 15th August. But in the year 1881, owing to the increase in the number of pilgrims, it was determined to revert to the former Station period, so that the Station season now extends from 1st June to 15th August,* during which period the prior and his assistants will be found in attendance.

We have already seen that the pilgrimage or station, according to modern custom, lasts for three days, though some continue their station for six, and even for nine days. It is customary for the pilgrims to arrive fasting, and to perform at least one station before partaking of food; hence it is that most of the pilgrims arrive in the earlier part of the day. Should the pilgrim not arrive fasting, this will necessitate his remaining an additional night on the island, as he cannot commence the Station until the morrow of his arrival. During the pilgrimage three Stations are performed each day. For the convenience and guidance of the pilgrims a large number of copies of the authorized devotional exercises were printed in 1876, and an amended copy still later, with the aid of which little difficulty will be encountered in going through the

* In the year 1860 the Station was closed owing to improvements and repairs being made on the island. After those repairs had been effected, and about the beginning of the month of August of that year, pilgrims were admitted to the island, and, with the sanction of the bishop of the diocese, the Station was kept open until the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, the 8th of September following. During that interval a considerable number of pilgrims arrived. This is the only instance I can find where the Station was kept open after the 15th of August.

routine of the Station exercises. I here insert a copy as amended :—

PILGRIMAGE OF LOUGH DERG.

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

"Unless you shall do Penance, you shall all likewise perish."
Luke, 13c., 3v.

The Station commences with a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church.

The Pilgrim then proceeds to "St. Patrick's Cross," near the same Church, and, kneeling, repeats there one Pater, one Ave, and Creed.

Next he goes to "St. Bridget's Cross," where, kneeling, he recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed.

Then, standing with his back to the Cross and outstretched arms, he thrice renounces the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.

He then makes seven circuits of St. Patrick's Church, repeating in each circuit one decade of the Rosary and adding a Creed to the last decade.

He next proceeds to the penitential cell or "Bed" nearest to St. Mary's Church, called "St. Bridget's Bed," and says three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed, whilst thrice making the circuit of this Bed on the outside. The same prayers are repeated while kneeling outside the entrance of the "Bed;" the same repeated while making three circuits of it on the inside; and the same prayers are repeated while kneeling at the Cross inside the Bed.

The same penitential exercises are performed successively at St. Brendan's Bed, St. Catherine's, and St. Columba's.

Around the large penitential Bed, six circuits are then made on the outside, while repeating nine Paters, nine Aves, and one Creed. The Pilgrim then kneels at the first entrance of this Bed, and recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed.

He next repeats three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed, while making the inside circuit of it; and again three Paters, three Aves, and a Creed, kneeling in the centre. He now proceeds to the second entrance of this Bed (which entrance is the one nearer to St. Patrick's Church), and, kneeling, recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed. The same prayers are recited whilst making the inner circuit of it; and the same, kneeling in the centre.

The Pilgrim now goes to the water's edge, where five Paters, five Aves, and one Creed are repeated, standing, and the same prayers, kneeling.

After this he returns to St. Patrick's Cross, from which he had first set out; and here says, on his knees, one Pater, one Ave, and one Creed.

He then enters St. Patrick's Church, where the Station is concluded, by saying five Paters, five Aves, and a Creed for the Pope's intention.

Three Stations with the foregoing prayers are performed each day, each Station being usually followed by five decades of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin.

The Pilgrim enters "Prison" on the evening of the first day, and there makes the Stations for the second day, by reciting the prayers of each Station as already given.

On the second day of the pilgrimage, each one goes to Confession.

In addition to the foregoing exercises, the Pilgrim assists each day at Morning Prayer, Mass, Meditation, Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Evening Prayer, Sermon and Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament.

Any information regarding the fast, etc., may be easily obtained on the Island.

The Station opens each year on the 1st of June, and closes on the festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, the 15th of August.

The better to enable pilgrims to understand how to get

through with their Station, I shall here add some explanatory information.

The pilgrim enters "prison" (*i.e.* St. Patrick's Church, so called because it serves the purpose of the ancient purgatorial cave,) the first evening after he commences his Station, and remains there until the same hour, six o'clock p.m., next evening. During the night "in prison," strict vigil is kept; the Stations for the following day are gone through, some person well-acquainted with the routine of the exercises directing the attention of those present to the different beds or oratories, etc.; and the intervals of the night are occupied with reciting rosaries, performing the Holy Way of the Stations of the Cross, etc.

At six o'clock, at latest, each morning, morning prayer commences in St. Patrick's Church, followed by the community Mass. At twelve o'clock, noon, there is a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church, followed by a spiritual lecture. Each evening at six o'clock the island bell summons the pilgrims to evening prayer in the same church, after which a sermon is preached, followed by Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. The religious discourses here delivered are of the most practical kind; are well calculated to awaken in the hearts of the pilgrims a lively sense of the eternal truths, and of their religious obligations; and, being so abundantly aided by divine grace, afford the pilgrims great help in preparing for Confession and Holy Communion. The public exercises of the day are brought to a close at nine o'clock each evening by the devotions of the Way of the Cross, conducted by one of the officiating clergymen, and accompanied by the choir. This particular devotion as carried out at Lough Derg, is so affecting and emotional that no one can form an adequate idea of it unless by assisting thereat in person. So prized and popular is it, that no

one, not even the cabin-keepers, would for a moment dream of being absent from it.

The circuits of the churches and saints' beds, which form a distinctive feature of the pilgrimage, and which, though not peculiar to Ireland, formerly in this country constituted a very common form of penance and devotion, are clearly explained in the "Exercises" given above. Those beds are the oldest structures at present remaining on Station Island; they are rather closely grouped together; and probably have received no material alteration * for hundreds of years past, at least not since the destruction and defacement of the structures at Lough Derg in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries. Four of the beds are surrounded by a low circular wall, not over one foot in height; while the walls round two others are about three feet high. They do not exceed ten

* With reference to the "Beds" on Station Island, the prior relates an occurrence that came under his notice, on the occasion of a visit paid by him to the island as *Curator* (the duty of *Curator* being to watch after the safety of the place during the non-Station period) thereof, and very soon after his appointment to that office, in the September of 1857. When on the island, an American Catholic gentleman, who had taken a deep interest in all he had seen, but especially in the cells or Saints' "Beds," accosted him thus:—"What a pity those venerable remains of a glorious past should remain in their present dilapidated condition. I suggest that they be forthwith thoroughly restored in first-class masonry, strictly adhering to their present plan and dimensions, and finished with a cut-stone circular coping, and, if this idea be adopted, I shall place 1,000 dollars (£200) in your hands for the purpose." The *Curator*, overjoyed at the offer, prudently submitted the matter to his bishop, who, to his great surprise, rebuked him for his simplicity, adding:—"The project could not be entertained for a moment. Those cells, venerable for their antiquity, speak trumpet-tongued of the glorious past; to touch them would be simply to destroy their value as historical monuments. Hitherto they were not altered or repaired by human hands, and never shall." Needless to add the gentleman, who had left his address, was never called upon to fulfil his promise.

or twelve feet in diameter, with the exception of St. Molaise's Bed, which is sixteen feet in diameter. A small gap in the circular enclosure forms an entrance to each of those beds, the inner floor being paved with stones, or formed of the bare rock worn smooth by the feet of pilgrims for so many generations; and in the centre of each bed stands a crucifix, having underneath the name of the saint to whom the bed is dedicated. Three of those bronze crucifixes, inscribed respectively "St. Patrick," "St. Brigid," and "St. Columbkille," were presented to the island by the late John Donegan, Jeweller, Dublin; while the remaining three crucifixes were ordered from Munich by Edward Nicholson, of Manchester, and presented to the island during the year 1878.

A large stone at the verge of the lake and partly submerged in water, where a portion of the prayers of the Station are recited, is called Leac-na-moan, meaning the penitential stone of the monk, *i.e.* St. Patrick, who by some writers was styled "the Monk, Patrick." Tradition has it that St. Patrick knelt and prayed upon this stone, leaving miraculously thereon the imprint of his knees, to be seen to this day.

The fast of the pilgrimage, according to immemorial custom, consists of one meal of meagre food each day; but wherever any just cause exists for relaxation in this, or in any other of the penitential austerities of the place, the prior, in whom is vested full jurisdiction and authority in those matters, or any of his assistants deputed by him for the purpose, will grant every reasonable dispensation, according to each particular case. To the credit, however, of the genuine faith and piety of the Irish people be it said, that the great majority of the pilgrims cheerfully undergo all the austerities of the pilgrimage, wisely considering a three days' mortification and penance as but

light and easy in comparison to the temporal punishment due to sin.

On the second day of his Station each pilgrim goes to confession in St. Mary's Church; and, if he should live a considerable distance from the lake, he usually obtains permission from the prior to anticipate one or two of the stations for the following day, in order that he might be in readiness to leave the island at an earlier hour. On the morning of the third day Holy Communion is received, the nine stations are completed, the prior's blessing is obtained, and the pilgrim is free to leave for home, unless he wishes to prolong his stay for a six or nine day station.

It may be useful to insert here the usual scale of tariff. Car fare from Pettigo to the lake, 6d.; ferry, return ticket, 8d.; island ticket, 10d. This latter item, paid by each pilgrim, goes to the support of the clergy ministering to the pilgrimage, and to meet the various incidental expenses of the place. The tariff for a three days' board and accommodation in the Hospice will amount to about 2s. 6d. for the period of a Station; in the cabins the charge is somewhat less. To priests, making here a week's ecclesiastical retreat, the terms may not exceed ten shillings.

Pilgrims are strictly prohibited, by a special rule, the use of intoxicating drinks upon the island, or within three miles of it, or anywhere during the three days of the Station period. They are also forbidden to carry away with them pebbles from the shore or islands, water from the lake, branches of trees, ferns, heath, or such like, without the prior's sanction and permission. There is just the danger that undue value might be attached to those things; and, though this may seem a small matter, order and discipline even in small things should be observed.

The throng of pilgrims greatly increases towards the festival of the Assumption, when the Station terminates;

and we here venture to remark that pilgrims coming at an earlier stage of the Station season would better consult for their own comfort and accommodation.

We have already seen that this venerable sanctuary was greatly cherished by several of the Roman Pontiffs, and that they enriched it with indulgences, which, in latter ages, were granted anew after the lapse of every fifteen years. There was a renewal of this plenary indulgence granted on the 26th June, 1870, by the late Holy Father, Pope Pius IX., of holy memory. Through the kindness of the late venerated Bishop Donnelly, I am enabled to give the authentic copies of the *Postulatio*, and of the Papal Indult itself.

The form of postulation is written in Italian, and is countersigned, "D. B. Smith. J—— 25, 1870."

This *Postulatio* is as follows:—

"Beatissimo Padre,

"Giacomo Donnelly, Vescovo di Clogher, in Irlanda, religiosamente espone alla Santita Vostra quanto seque.

"Nella sua diocesi avvi un santuario detto il Purgatorio di S. Patrizio, frequentato dai divoti non solo d'Irlanda, ma d'Inghilterra e di Scozia; ogni pellegrino passa almeno tre giorni in detto santuario in pii esercizi, e frequenza dei sacramenti della Confessione ed Eucaristia, secondo la direzione dei preti secolari, che diriggono quel luogo: di esso parla ancora Benedetto XIII., nel Sermone 13, de Purgatorio; e gli storici dicono che un tal pelegrinaggio sia stato istituito da S. Patrizio stesso. Benche nel tempo della persecuzione dei Protestanti si adoperasse ogni sforzo per rovinar detto santuario, pure non vi si riusci; ed esso dura ancora con immenso vantaggio della salute spirituale dei prossimi, e religione Cattolica.

"Secondo il *Relatio Status* fatto nel 1814 da Monsigr. Murphy, Vescovo di Clogher la S. Sede aveva concessa una indulgenza alla visita del Purgatorio di S. Patrizio.

"Quindi S. Oratore supplica la santita vostra degnarsi di accordare l'indulgenza plenaria, applicabile alle anime del purgatorio, a tutti i fideli, che premessi i sancti sacramenti della Confessione e Communione visita il detto santuario, e cio *toties quoties* ripeteranno dette prattiche della SS. Communione durante gli esercizi che ecc."

The following may be regarded as a pretty literal translation of the foregoing document:—

"Most Holy Father,

"James Donnelly, Bishop of Clogher, in Ireland, respectfully submits to your Holiness what follows.

"In his diocese he has a sanctuary called St. Patrick's Purgatory, which is frequented by the devout not only of Ireland, but from England and Scotland also. Each pilgrim spends at least three days at the said sanctuary in pious exercises, and frequentation of the sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist, under the direction of the secular priests, who have charge of the place. Of it, likewise, Benedict XIII. speaks in the 13th Sermon on Purgatory. Historians say that such a pilgrimage was established by the said St. Patrick. And although at the time of the persecution by the Protestants, every effort was made to destroy the said sanctuary, yet they could not destroy it; and it still subsists with immense advantage to the spiritual welfare of the surrounding people, and to the Catholic religion.

"According to the *Relatio Status*, made in 1814 by Dr. Murphy, Bishop of Clogher, the Holy See had attached an indulgence to the visit of the Purgatory of St. Patrick.

"Hence Petitioner begs that your Holiness will be pleased to grant a plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in Purgatory, to all the faithful who, having previously received the Holy Sacraments of Confession and Communion, visit the said sanctuary, and who repeat *toties quoties* the aforesaid practice of Holy Communion during the exercises."

The following is a copy of the Papal Indult, granting the prayer of the above petition by according a plenary indulgence to this pilgrimage :—

"Ex audientia SSimi, die 26 Junii, 1870.

"SSimus D. N. Pius Divina Providentia PP. IX. referente me infra-scripto S. C. de Propaganda Fide Secretario, benigne prorogavit Indulgentiam Plenariam lucrandam ab omnibus Christi fidelibus, qui confessi ac sacra Eucharistia refecti prædictam capellam vulgo Purgatorium S. Patritii visitaverint, ibique per aliquod temporis spatium pias ad Deum fuderint preces pro S. Fidei propagatione, et juxta summi Pontificis intentionem.

"Dat. Romæ ex æd. dic. S. C. die et anno ut supra.

"Gratis sine ulla solutione quocumque titulo.

"JOANNES SIMEONI, Secretarius."

This Indult may be translated as follows :—

"From an audience of His Holiness, on the 26th day of June, 1870.

"Our Most Holy Father Pius IX., by Divine Providence Pope, at the representation of me, the undersigned Secretary of the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide*, has graciously prolonged the concession of a plenary indulgence to be gained by all the faithful, who, having confessed and being nourished by the Holy Eucharist, shall have visited the above-mentioned sanctuary, commonly called the Purgatory of St. Patrick, and there, during some space of time, shall have offered up pious prayers to God for the propagation of our holy faith, and according to the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.

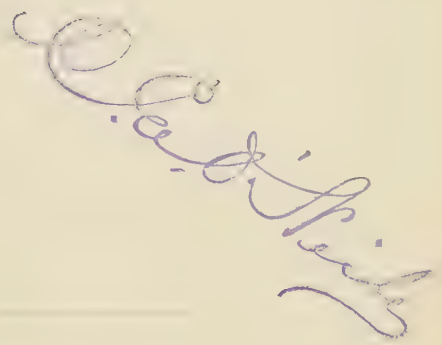
"Given at Rome, from the Office of said Sacred Congregation, on the date and year above named.

"*Gratis*, without any payment under whatever title.

"JOHN SIMEONI, Secretary."

From the foregoing Indult it will be seen that the indulgences accorded to this pilgrimage are given for an indefinite period; consequently they may be understood as annexed to the pilgrimage, until withdrawn by the Holy See.

The pious pilgrim to Lough Derg must feel heartfelt satisfaction in reading the above Indult, which may be regarded as the charter and title deed of the pilgrimage, and as the endowment of it with spiritual favours by a Pontiff, whose career was so glorious, and who loved the Irish race so tenderly because of their constant faith and fervent piety.



CHAPTER XVIII.

A NEW ERA FOR LOUGH DERG—MANY PRELATES AND OTHER ECCLESIASTICS VISIT IT—DR. CROKE, ARCHBISHOP OF CASHEL—DR. LYNCH, ARCHBISHOP OF TORONTO—THE NEW HOSPICE—THE LESLIE LITIGATION—SECOND VISIT OF ARCHBISHOP LYNCH—UNVEILING OF THE STATUES OF "OUR LADY OF LOUGH DERG," "ST. JOSEPH," AND "ST. PATRICK."

URING the Station Season of 1879 the attention of the public became rivetted on Lough Derg, as it had not been before, and all eyes turned to admire in wonderment the austere penances performed at its sanctuary. Amongst those who longed personally to behold this venerated shrine the illustrious Archbishop of Cashel, Most Rev. Dr. Croke, merits prominent rank. He came to Lough Derg, accompanied by Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly and several clergymen, on the 22nd of July, 1879. The distinguished visitors were met at the ferry-house by the prior and his assistant priests; and during the passage to the island the Psalm *Miserere* was intoned, the island bell the while pealing forth its gladsome notes of welcome. Having reached the island, they proceeded to visit the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church; after which they made a minute inspection of the place, its churches, penitential oratories, cabins, etc. His Grace bestowed a meed of praise upon what he had seen, upon the churches, which he pronounced very suitable, not omitting to remark upon the good order and neatness apparent throughout.

At the conclusion of the visitation, the large boat of the ferry was put in readiness, and prelates, priests, and many of the pilgrims embarked for a voyage to Saints' Island, around which, as Rosa Mulholland puts it in her *Wild Birds of Killeevy*, "the mystical atmosphere of the legend of the Knight still hangs." During the passage the *Benedictus* was chanted, and also the "Farewell Ode to Lough Derg" sung by several well-trained voices. Arrived at the island, a minute inspection was made of it, especially of the ruins of the church and convent; and on reaching the island cemetery, all reverently uncovered, while the prelates and clergy solemnly intoned the Psalm *De Profundis*. Returning from Saints' Island, Dr. Murray's "Song for the Pope" was admirably rendered by the then Adm. of Marlboro' Street Cathedral, Rev. Father O'Reilly. Dr. Croke, having taken leave of the prior, and having imparted his blessing to the pilgrims, whom he addressed in a few eloquent sentences of exhortation, took his departure from Station Island, escorted to the mainland by a large retinue. During the passage across, the *Magnificat* was chanted, the "Farewell Ode to Lough Derg" again rendered, and thus ended a very memorable and pleasing visit.

On the 29th of July, same year, came the Right Rev. Monsignor Lee, Dean of Dublin, accompanied by the President of Maynooth College, Dr. Browne, now the accomplished bishop of Cloyne, and the Very Rev. Joseph Phelan, President of Waterford College.

Next day, 30th July, arrived Most Rev. Dr. Gillooly, bishop of Elphin, and Most Rev. Dr. M'Cormack, then bishop of Achonry, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Strickland, S.J., and Rev. Father M'Donagh. They made a close examination of the pilgrimage, and expressed delight at the edifying spectacle which the pilgrims, engaged in their Station duties, presented.

Soon after those venerable prelates had taken their departure, on the 5th of August, same year, the Very Rev. Dr. B. Russell, O.P., and Fr. O'Dwyer, O.P., Dundalk, came upon the island, where they remained for two days, during which they actively engaged in aiding the prior and his assistants in the work of the confessional and in preaching.

The most notable event, however, of 1879 was the visit of his Grace, Most Rev. John Joseph Lynch, Archbishop of Toronto, who, on his way to Rome to pay the customary visit *Ad Limina*, took occasion to turn aside to visit his native land, and to make a pilgrimage to Lough Derg. At Clones (his Grace's native parish), he was joined by the bishop of Clogher, who accompanied his illustrious friend and fellow-pilgrim to Station Island. At four o'clock, p.m., on Monday, 11th of August, the party came in view of the ferryhouse, accompanied by several priests, amongst others the Archbishop's secretary, Father Bergin, Rev. John Beggan, S.M., Rev. M. Collier, P.P., and also Mr. O'Callaghan of Dublin. The prior deputed his two assistants to meet the illustrious visitors at the ferryhouse; and on the voyage the *Miserere*, according to island custom, was chanted, the pealing of the island bell notifying to all within reach of its sound that an event of unusual importtance was taking place. On arriving at the boat-quay all the pilgrims on the island, including several from the United States and other distant lands, some even from the Archbishop's diocese of Toronto, knelt down to receive a blessing from the two prelates. Immediately they, together with the accompanying priests, entered upon the Station exercises, in the first place making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church, where they remained for some time engaged in prayer and meditation.

At six p.m., the appointed hour for the evening devotions, the Archbishop, after reciting aloud with the pilgrims

the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin, preached a sermon replete with fervour, unction and devotion, in which, after bestowing a fitting tribute of admiration upon the heroic penances and most edifying piety of the pilgrims, he characterised the pilgrimage of Lough Derg as one of the holiest, and certainly one of the most penitential institutions on the face of the earth. He added that in the Providence of God the pilgrimage has contributed largely to preserve and increase in this "Martyr Nation" all the virtues of our holy religion, especially that burning zeal for the faith, which makes of the exiled Irish pioneers and missionaries of religion in every land to which they are driven.

The impression produced by that eloquent address is one that shall never be forgotten by the large congregation assembled in St. Patrick's Church. At the close of the sermon his Grace gave Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. Next day the Archbishop, the Bishop of Clogher, and the other priests, continued their Station exercises, during the intervals assisting the island priests in the work of the confessional, and other duties.

The Archbishop during those days caused a bunch of shamrocks from Saints' Island, together with some of the bread and "wine" used by the pilgrims, to be carefully packed, in order that he might have the former planted in the Pope's gardens, and with the intention of submitting to his Holiness a sample of the penitential fare of the pilgrims.

At ten o'clock on the morning of 14th of August, the distinguished visitors prepared to take their departure from Station Island. The ferry-boat and three smaller ones, all densely thronged with pilgrims proceeding on their homeward journey, were drawn up at the quay. The pilgrims remaining on the island had collected around

the quay, and all knelt down to receive the blessing of the prelates. The bishop of Clogher was the first to give his blessing to the kneeling multitude, next the Archbishop imparted his blessing amid their tears at his departure, and their fervent prayers that God might speed him safely to the Eternal City. At the conclusion of his Grace's benediction, the boats put off from shore, and the pathetic "Farewell Ode to Lough Derg" was sung by one of the priests, the refrain being taken up by every voice in the escort. Next, the *Magnificat* was chanted by the prelates, the priests responding at every alternate verse; and, by the time its last words were dying away on the still waters of the lake, the ferryhouse was reached, and after the most cordial leave-taking the good prelates with their party bade farewell to the "Holy Island."

During his stay at Station Island, the Archbishop of Toronto addressed to his Vicar-General, Very Rev. P. F. Rooney, St. Mary's Church, Toronto, two letters, detailing the exercises of the pilgrimage. Those admirable letters were published in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal* of 20th and 21st of August, in that year. They show how fully he had mastered all the details of the pilgrimage, and they afford a vivid insight into the efficacy of those exercises for obtaining extraordinary graces and favours from God.

Before quitting Station Island, Dr. Lynch suggested the propriety of forwarding a copy of *Lough Derg and its Pilgrimages*, then recently published, to the Holy Father. Accordingly, a copy, richly bound, and with the Papal arms embossed on its cover, was sent by his Grace, who notified its acceptance in a letter prefixed to this edition.

During the stay of Archbishop Lynch at Lough Derg, the project, for a long time under consideration, of erecting a Hospice on the island for the accommodation of pilgrims,

especially those of the better class, was finally decided upon. The contributions promised at the preliminary meeting included £100 from the bishop of Clogher, Archbishop Lynch £20, Father Collier, P.P., St. Agatha's, Dublin, £5, and several smaller sums. It was also considered advisable that the prior, Very Rev. James M'Kenna, should visit some of the more prominent places of pilgrimage in England and on the Continent, particularly Holywell, Lourdes, and Paray-le-Monial, and closely examine the inns, or hospices there erected for the accommodation of pilgrims, with the view of utilising the information so obtained towards designing a similar institution for Lough Derg.

Father M'Kenna embarked on this mission on 12th September, 1879. After a month's absence he returned, and, with the knowledge thus obtained, he prepared the plan and details of the Hospice, and actually commenced building operations early in the following Spring. Owing to careful superintendence of the work by the prior in person, the cost of the Hospice was but £2,000. In the estimation of persons best qualified to form an opinion, the structure is regarded as well worth £3,000 at least.

The Hospice is a large three-storied, conventual, double building. It consists of a centre building, 100 feet long by 20 feet wide, flanked by two wings, each 34 feet by 20 feet; the height of the main building and of the wings being 21 feet from the basement to the level of the eaves. From its four long corridors open on either side the rooms or cells of the pilgrims, commanding from the windows exquisite views of lake and mountain.

The appointments of the Hospice are as follows:—The main house is altogether devoted to cells and dormitories. The wings to waiting rooms, refection rooms and dormitories in the attics. The house is divided into two equal departments, one for males, and the other for females. It comprises 24 bed-

rooms, 4 dormitories, capable of containing 104 beds, 2 refection rooms, 2 waiting rooms and 2 kitchens, with all other necessary accommodation. It will thus be seen that the two separate departments, that of the males and that of the females, though under the same pile, are yet each quite distinct, and each fully supplied with equal accommodation. The Hospice is presided over by a matron with a suitable staff of servants, and all under the supervision of the prior.

It may interest many to learn that most of the stones used in the building were collected around the shore of the lake and islands; 10,000 tons of stones were thus provided, the boat used for the purpose carrying 4 tons in each load. 4,000 tons of sand were similarly boated across from the lake-shore at Trabane, *i.e.* the white strand; 2,000 barrels of lime were also used in the building, and this was drawn from Pettigo. 100 tons of cut-stone were conveyed by train upwards of forty miles from the Brookeborough quarries. Many of the Protestant farmers of Templecarne parish assisted their Catholic neighbours in carting the materials for the Hospice from the railway station at Pettigo.

The prior had not proceeded far in his preparations for erecting the Hospice, when he found indications of the coming storm, which threatened to burst upon his devoted head. In making ready the foundations he at one particular corner protruded somewhat on the bed of the lake. The landlord, who claimed a right of ownership not only in the lough, but even in the island, resented this. In vain would it be to show that in certain dry seasons, or when "the carry-mouth" (as the outlet of the river Derg is termed), is free from impediments, the ledge of rock all round the Hospice is *terra firma*. Nor would it anywise extenuate the fault to represent that, owing to the limited area of the site, hemmed in on one side by the lough, and on the other by the penal cells or circles, this particular encroachment on

Station Island, Lough Derg, 1886.

the water was unavoidable. The landlord's proprietary rights, though there be question of only a few feet of debatable land or water, must be maintained; and so, after some desultory correspondence, the issue was knit between the plaintiff, Sir John Leslie, and the defendant, Most Rev. James Donnelly. Accordingly on the 12th of January, 1881, a writ of summons and plaint was issued against defendant in which plaintiff claimed "£200 damages for wrongfully entering the plaintiff's land of Station Island, Lough Derg, in the county of Donegal, and depositing earth and materials there, and in the said lough, and building thereon. And for an injunction restraining the defendant from continuing to deposit earth and materials there, and from building thereon, and the committal of other injuries of a like kind relating to the same right." In this proceeding the venue was fixed in Fermanagh, and the trial was to come off at the ensuing March assizes before Baron Fitzgerald and a Fermanagh special jury.

The defendant moved that the venue be changed to Donegal, the county in which the action lay, and ultimately it was so fixed, the trial to come off at Lifford at the following summer assizes. The bishop, fully convinced that the Leslies had no valid title to the island, was still apprehensive of the result of a trial in court, being well aware how readily forgotten Statutes are raked up and decisions rendered in the landlord's favour in such cases. He secured competent legal talent * to defend the rights of the Catholics of Ireland to their cherished pilgrimage. All the preliminary work entailed no small bill

* Defendant's solicitor was Mr. James Riordan of Omagh, who spent months in hunting up documents bearing on the case, and in investigating title-deeds, etc. A strong Bar were also engaged, including A. M. Porter, Q.C. (now Master of the Rolls), special, at 100 guineas retainer; William M'Loughlin, Q.C.; M. Drummond, B.L., and E. O'D. M'Devitt, B.L., Esquires.

of expenses; for not only had the lawyers to be fee'd, but ancient records had to be investigated and copied, scientific men employed to enlighten the jury on the points at issue, and a host of witnesses from a distance to be brought up. On Saturday, July 16th, the case was about to be called, when defendant's solicitor came to him stating he was empowered by Sir John's counsel to propose the terms of a settlement. The terms being, 1st, that Sir John withdrew all claim to the Island, and 2nd, that he was prepared to give a lease for 999 years of that portion of the water upon which the hospice abutted at 1 shilling per year, if demanded.

The question of costs had not been as yet discussed. After considerable consultation, all the priests present urging upon him the advisability of accepting the terms, the bishop acceded. Meanwhile Mr. M'Loughlin, Q.C., explained the case to us from a legal point of view, showing the advantages to be secured under the proposed settlement. The agreement was made a rule of court, duly signed by the landlord's representative and agent, Mr. James M'Cullagh, and by the bishop, the costs of each side to be borne by each side respectively. A writer, Mr. Wm. D. Kelly, in the *Ave Maria*, thus sums up the result:—"Of course everybody conceded the result to be a signal triumph for Dr. Donnelly. Had he shown the least irresolution or wavering, the probabilities are that the Leslie claim would have been pressed; in which case the Catholics of Ireland might have been deprived of one of their oldest, holiest, and most popular places of pilgrimage."

The present venerated Bishop of Clogher, Most Rev. Dr. Owens, in his panegyric on the occasion of the month's mind of his predecessor, referring "to the attempt made to usurp the inalienable rights of this ancient see, and to

cripple the freedom and independence of Lough Derg," truly says:—"If the fame of the pilgrimage is more widely known to-day, if its name is more deeply venerated, its penitential austerities more appreciated and more frequented than at any period in modern times, the result is due to his influence and fostering care, aided, no doubt, by the hearty and generous co-operation of zealous, hard-working priests."

If the bishop and priests of Clogher did their part in this contentious and costly suit, as it must be conceded they did nobly, the laity of the diocese, too, deserve a large measure of praise for the munificent collection contributed by each parish in the diocese, as the accompanying list will testify:—

DIOCESE OF CLOGHER.

PAROCHIAL COLLECTIONS

TO MEET COSTS OF LOUGH DERG LAW-SUIT—BALANCE TO GO TOWARDS THE HOSPICE.

PARISH.		£	s.	d.
MONAGHAN—Revs. M. Martin, Adm., £2, P. Smith, £2, J. M'Kenna, £2, ...	Total	62	5	0
CLONTIBRET—Revs. P. Farnan, Adm., £1, L. Keenan, £1, J. Griffin, £1, ...	,,	21	4	10
AUGHABOG—Revs. B. Duffy, P.P., £1, J. Meegan, Adm., £1, ...	,,	7	6	6
AUGHNAMULLEN EAST—	,,	4	9	0
AUGHNAMULLEN WEST—Revs. F. M'Kenna, P.P., £1, A. M'Learney, £1, ...	,,	9	0	6
AUGHAVAY—Rev. W. M'Quaid, £3, ...	,,	9	8	4
AUGHINTAIN—Rev. T. M'Nulty, P.P., £1, ...	,,	8	9	6
BLACK BOG—	,,	8	11	6
CARRICKMACROSS—V. Rev. Dean, £3, Rev. E. M'Mahon, £1, ...	,,	19	0	0
CLEENISH—V. R. Canon M'Quaid, £2, ...	,,	13	1	6
CLOGHER—Revs. B. Duffy, P.P., £2, Luke Bogue, £1,	,,	15	13	3
CLONES—V. Rev. Canon Smollen, £2, Rev. J. Woods, £1.	,,	16	6	0
CURRIN—Rev. P. Donnelly, P.P., £1, ...	,,	6	10	0
DERRYGONNELLY—	,,	10	0	0
DONAGH—Revs. J. M'Genniss, P.P., £1, J. M'Meel, 10s.,	,,	9	6	0
DONAGHMOYNE—V. Rev. Canon M'Mahon, £2, Revs. P. Carvill, 10s., L. Gaughran, 10s., ...	,,	15	6	6
DONEGAVY—V. Rev. Canon Cassidy, £2, Rev. P. Callan, £1, ...	,,	10	1	3

		£	s.	d.
Dromore—V. Rev. Canon M'Kenna, £20, Rev. B. O'Mahony, 10s., ...	Total	42	0	0
Drummully—Rev. H. Ward, P.P., £1, ...	,,	11	16	6
Drumsnat and Kilmore—Revs. P. Byrne, P.P., £1, T. Conlon, 10s., ...	,,	15	18	5
Ematris—Rev. M. Melly, P.P., £1, ...	,,	8	1	6
Enniskillen—V. Rev. Archdeacon, £2, Rev. E. M'Kenna, £1, ...	,,	52	2	6
Errigal Truagh—Rev. D. O'Connor, P.P., £5, Revs. M. M'Glone, £1, E. Slevin, 10s., ...	,,	31	4	9
Eskra—Revs. L. E. Leonard, P.P., £1, T. M'Ardle, £1,	,,	7	0	0
Garrison—Revs. J. Kelly, P.P., £1, P. O'Neill, £1, ...	,,	8	0	1
Inniskeen—	,,	10	5	0
Innismacsaint—Revs. J. Tierney, £1, R. Delaney, £1,	,,	18	17	6
Killanny—Rev. Thomas Murphy, Adm., £1, ...	,,	4	10	0
Killeevan—Revs. M. Traynor, P.P., £1, J. Gallagher, 10s., ...	,,	10	6	7
Kilskerry—V. Rev. Canon Clifford, £5, Rev. E. Geraghty, £1, ...	,,	24	0	0
Magheracloone—V. Rev. Canon Hoey, £1, Rev. J. M'Carney, 10s., ...	,,	8	12	6
Maguiresbridge—Revs. J. Cassidy, P.P., £1, P. M'Ginity, 10s., ...	,,	8	15	6
Muckno—V. Rev. Dr. Bermingham, £1, Rev. P. M'Connan, £1, ...	,,	9	15	0
Pettigo—Revs. J. M'Kenna, P.P., £5, P. Byrne, £1, ...	,,	20	13	2
Rosslea—V. Rev. Canon Duffy, £1, Revs. P. M'Cabe, 10s., P. M'Kean, 10s., ...	,,	15	0	0
Tempo—The P.P., £1, Rev. Eugene Traynor, £1, ...	,,	7	7	6
Tullycorbet—V. Rev. Canon O'Neill, £1, Rev. J. M'Elroy, 10s., ...	,,	16	11	2
Tydavnet—Revs. J. Shiel, P.P., £1, M. Duffy, 10s., T. Cummins, 10s., ...	,,	14	0	0
Tyhollan—Rev. J. Bartley, P.P., £1, ...	,,	5	0	0
Whitehill—Revs. H. Maguire, P.P., £2, P. M'Vicker, £1, ...	,,	15	0	6
Total amount of Parochial Collections, ...		£610	17	10

MICHAEL MARTIN, Adm., Secretary.

Monaghan, 15th October, 1881.

The Hospice, though almost completed during the summer of 1881, was not open for the reception of pilgrims until the following Station Season of '82. The Sisters of St. Louis of the Monaghan Convent, with a charity redounding to their credit, generously undertook the duty of looking after the wants of the pilgrims in the Hospice for the first few seasons, and for that purpose

some of the good Sisters took up a temporary residence on the island. Besides ensuring careful attention to the pilgrims in the Hospice, and providing for its orderly discipline and good management, they took charge of the adornment of the altars for Mass and Benediction, and conducted the island choir with the utmost satisfaction.

In the early part of July 1882, the Hospice being now fully completed and furnished, word arrived that the Archbishop of Toronto was about to pay a second visit to the shrine of his affection. On the 7th of that month, his Grace, joined by the bishop of Clogher, and accompanied by several priests, ecclesiastical students, and a large body of lay pilgrims, proceeded by the Bundoran Junction to Pettigo, and soon they arrived at the shore of the lake, where they were met by the island boat, which quickly landed them on the island. When they had prayed for some time before the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church, their first care was to inspect the new Hospice.

On the following day the Statue of "Our Blessed Lady of Lough Derg," executed in white Italian marble by Mr. O'Neill, Dublin, and presented by two pious votaries of the pilgrimage, Mr. and Mrs. John M'Caffrey of Kilmarnock, Scotland, was erected on a pedestal of finely-dressed stone in front of the Hospice. On the same day arrived the President of All Hallows Missionary College, Dublin, Very Rev. Dr. Fortune, with two deacons, Rev. Charles Hegarty for the diocese of Toronto, and the Rev. Andrew Cassidy* for the distant mission of Wellington, New Zealand,

* The former of these died some years ago, and the latter (Father Cassidy), after years of arduous labour in several missions in the Pacific, returned to revisit his native land in the summer of 1894, during which he paid a fond visit to the Holy Island of Lough Derg.

who were to be raised on the following day to the holy order of priesthood by Archbishop Lynch.

Early on Sunday the 9th of July, large numbers of pilgrims might be seen making their "Station" round the "beds," and crowds were already assembling at the ferry-house, the road leading from Pettigo being for the greater part of the day marked by a long line of cars and pedestrians. So great was the assemblage that, as the ferryman assured me, no less than 1,200 pilgrims and visitors were ferried across during the day without the least delay, disappointment, or accident of any kind. Over a dozen priests had also arrived, chiefly from the dioceses of Clogher and Derry. A goodly number, too, of ecclesiastical students put in an appearance, some of whom the Archbishop adopted, and of the number one at least is now labouring fruitfully on the Toronto mission.

The Ordination Mass commenced at eight o'clock, the ordaining prelate being the Archbishop. The ceremony over, there was considerable crowding around the sanctuary, all present being eager to receive the blessing of the newly ordained priests, the proceedings lasting for several hours.

A two o'clock, p.m., the clergy formed in processional order in St. Patrick's Church, and proceeded round the lake side of the church, preceded by the banner of St. Patrick (presented by his Grace to the sanctuary as a votive offering), chanting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. They took up their position in front of the Hospice with the choir. After singing the prayer proper to the occasion, the Bishop of Clogher unveiled the Statue, and next the *Magnificat* was solemnly chanted.

The Bishop of Clogher ascended the platform and addressed some beautiful sentences to the multitude, declaring unveiled the statue, which would long remain as a

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model of high religious art, finished as it was with all the excellence that Irish genius could impart to it. Next the Archbishop preached the sermon, in the course of which he declared "a statue of the Blessed Virgin to have been a necessity of the place, to serve as a continual lesson to have confidence in her intercession with our Redeemer. Other statues in time would be erected; they wanted one for St. Joseph, and one for St. Patrick. Ireland he regarded as rich beyond all other countries in places of holy pilgrimage. She had her holy wells, and especially her holy Island of Lough Derg."

Thus ended an event signalised by two ceremonies, never, perhaps, before witnessed on Station Island, namely, the ceremony of ordination, and the solemn blessing and unveiling of a religious statue.

On the 13th of July the venerated prelates took their departure from Lough Derg. Nor did the words of his grace fall on inattentive ears, for, ere many years had sped, the statue of the Blessed Virgin was flanked by statues of St. Joseph and St. Patrick. The late bishop of Clogher, whilst providing for his magnificent Cathedral a wealth of marble not surpassed in any church within those kingdoms, brought with him from Carrara two beautiful statues of St. Joseph and St. Patrick to be erected on Station Island. All the art of the sculptor was lavished upon them, and the visitor is struck with amazement at the delicate tracery of the lace representation as shown on the rochet of St. Patrick, not to speak of other special features of excellence. St. Patrick is represented in full pontificals, with his crozier in one hand. and a shamrock in the other. Greatly to the bishop's surprise, the artist, on hearing that the statues were intended for Lough Derg, stated that he was familiar with the history of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and would consequently, out of

veneration for it, devote all care and skill towards the special perfection of the work. They were duly erected and blessed by the prior on 4th of July, 1891. They stand 7 ft. 2 in. in height, set upon octagon-shaped freestone pedestals, and are pronounced by specialists to be second to none in Ireland in point of artistic merit, their money value alone being ordinarily estimated at between £200 and £300 each.

Among the special benefactors of Lough Derg, the late John Donegan, jeweller, Dublin, fully realised, as so few have done, the importance of this pilgrimage, and its claims on the generosity of the Irish race. In the summer of 1858 he made a present to its sanctuary of certain church requisites to the value of £170. In connection with this presentation the following extract from the *Nation* of August 14th, 1858, will be interesting :—

"John Donegan, whose munificence to the Catholic Church at home and abroad ranks him among the greatest benefactors to Catholicity, of whom we may be justly proud, has made the following offerings to the chapel of Lough Derg—a monstrance, chalice, ciborium (of solid silver), cope, veil, suit of vestments (cloth of gold), set of candlesticks, fine brass crucifix, bookstand, missal (beautifully bound), thurible, incense boat, altar linens, incense, chime of bells, brass lamp, and wax candles. The chapel on the island, such a famous resort of pilgrims for many ages, stood in great want of these religious requisites, and priests and pilgrims shall evermore be bound to pray for this truly Catholic Irishman, whose gold and silver now adorn an altar annually visited by thousands. An inscription on the sacred utensils records the name of the generous benefactor, and states that they are presented to the Right Rev. Dr. M'Nally, Bishop of Clogher, and that they are to be henceforth the property of that ancient diocese, and to be used in the chapel of Lough Derg."

The inscription on the monstrance runs thus :—

"Presented by John Donegan of Dublin, to the Right Rev. Dr. M'Nally and his successors, to be used by the clergymen officiating in the Island of Lough Derg—A.D. 1858."

A ciborium, the gift of most Rev. Dr. M'Nally, has the following inscription :—

"*Donum Epi. Cloghers. Sanctuario vulgo dicto*
Purgat. Sti. Patritii, seu L. Derg.—A.D. 1851."

And a chalice in St. Mary's is marked on foot :—

"Lough Derg, 1857."

A large present of altar linens and other requisites was made to the sanctuary by the late Rev. Mother Beale, Superioress of the Convent of St. Louis, Monaghan, who, accompanied by some of the sisters of her community, came here on pilgrimage about twenty-five years ago. Several other kind benefactors have remembered Lough Derg in their charity ; and we fondly cherish the hope that their bright example may be followed by others still until the Sanctuary of St. Patrick's Purgatory shall have regained its ancient celebrity, and taken the place which it deserves amongst the celebrated places of pilgrimage throughout the world.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HEALTHFUL CLIMATE OF LOUGH DERG—PECULIAR EFFICACY OF ITS STATION EXERCISES—THE PEACE AND HAPPINESS EXPERIENCED IN THIS PILGRIMAGE—SYMBOLICAL MEANING OF THE STATION EXERCISES—WHY THE IRISH HEART LOVES LOUGH DERG—THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE—VALEDICTORY—THE PILGRIMS' "FAREWELL HYMN TO LOUGH DERG."

ISITORS to Lough Derg speak in the highest praise of the salubrious quality of its climate. Nor need this be wondered at; for, situated as it is within eight or ten miles of Donegal Bay, the ozone of the sea is wafted over the intervening hills by the prevailing west winds from the Atlantic. The sea air, tempered in its course by the mountain breezes, thus becomes singularly bracing and stimulating; so much so, that, during the dry, warm days of summer, the atmosphere of Lough Derg is perhaps the most healthful and invigorating to be found in Ireland. And to this circumstance may be, to a great extent, attributed the almost total immunity from sickness, which the island enjoys.

The oldest inhabitant of the locality can scarcely remember a death to have occurred here out of all the crowds of pilgrims, many of them old, feeble and delicate, who travelled long distances to the island, and there performed the Station in all its rigour. Over fifty years have passed since the last death took place on the island. This was in the case of an aged woman, whose remains were interred in the cemetery of the pilgrimage on Saints' Island, and

whose funeral was accompanied to her last resting-place by all the pilgrims then "on Station." So genial is the atmosphere that few are heard to complain of the slightest indisposition while they remain here, and a medical attendant's visit to the place is an event of the rarest occurrence. If this happy result be owing in some part to its healthful climate, it cannot be denied that the practice of mortification and penance, as here observed, forms an important factor; the practice of mortification, as we know, not only proving salutary to the soul, but contributing, likewise, to bodily health.

Frequently does it occur that ladies and others of delicate constitution, unaccustomed to toil or fatigue of any sort, enter upon their Station exercises, walk barefoot on the wet grass, tread in wind and rain over the hard, rocky path, while making the rounds of their Station; and, instead of catching a cold, or suffering in health, they leave the island much improved and invigorated.

Many might regard it as impossible that the pilgrims could undergo the severe ordeal of a Station on the simple fare provided. Elsewhere such might be the case; but here it is quite practicable. So absorbed is the mind of the pilgrim in the exercise of heroic penance, that he frequently forgets to look after his solitary meal of bread and "wine," or black tea, till an advanced hour in the evening.

Another characteristic of the pilgrimage is the fact that the mind of the pilgrim is so taken up with the serious work on hand, he loses for the time being all thought of the outer world, which he has just quitted; family, friends, home and business becoming for the nonce almost forgotten.

At this shrine a true spirit of fraternity and equality prevails. Dignities, honours, wealth, education, and social position find here no special distinction or acknowledg-

ment. The prince and the peasant,* the highborn dame and the lowly cottage maiden must here alike submit to the Station discipline, which knows no relaxation, except for sufficient cause submitted to and approved of by the prior.

Elsewhere penitential austerities may have become modified in accordance with the circumstances of the age, but at Lough Derg the discipline of penance is as unchanged as when St. Patrick, and the holy cenobites, who imitated his extraordinary mortification, peopled those cells, or beds, round which a moving line of pilgrims may be seen reciting their devotions throughout the Station season. The pilgrimage of Lough Derg is as unchangeable as that majestic mountain barrier which perpetually sentinels its lake.

It is a fact, upon which all are agreed, that the devotional exercises of Lough Derg possess an extraordinary efficacy in securing the necessary dispositions for worthily receiving the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Not rarely, too, does it happen that persons, who have attended missions or retreats elsewhere (such persons regarding the mission as only a preparatory course for properly entering on this pilgrimage), come here in order to secure that interior happiness which its exercises are so calculated to produce. Nor are there wanting many and convincing reasons to show the peculiar efficacy of its exercises. In the first place, that crucial test of the sanctity of a place, the *nonne cor nostrum ardens erat in nobis*, here forces itself on the mind. One feels, in this place, that he walks upon holy ground; that here the prayer blessed by

* In latter years there is a perceptible falling off in the number of pilgrims of the humbler classes, but more than a proportionate increase in arrivals of the better-off classes, including many foreigners, and priests of every order, with an occasional bishop.

penance is certain of being heard, that here the soul is allowed close converse with God, and that here God enriches the pious pilgrim with copious graces.

Besides, every penitential exercise here practised increases in the soul veneration for the sanctity of the place, combined with love and reverence for God, the Author of all sanctity. At the very outset of his Station the pilgrim divests himself of his shoes, out of respect for the sanctity of the place, through a spirit of penance, and in conformity with the admonition given by God to Moses: "Come not nigh hither; put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (Exod. iii. 5.) In addition to this the men wear neither hat nor cap while on the island.

Again, are not the observances of fasting, vigil, and prayer, as here observed, in direct keeping with the constant teaching and precepts of our Divine Saviour? And where, may we ask, are those salutary precepts so faithfully followed as on the holy island of Lough Derg? Need we wonder, therefore, that they are such powerful helps in disposing the pilgrims for worthily receiving the Sacraments? Next, walking round the churches and saints' "beds," over the uneven surface of the rock, rough stones, water-gravel, etc., does it not convey the very idea of pilgrimage, and suggest very forcibly man's mortal journeying through the desert-places of this world—of this "vale of tears"? In making circuits of the saints' "beds," we are reminded of the mortified and penitential lives led by those great servants of God, who within those little cells, or in others of similar construction, passed the day in rigid penance, and during the night reposed their weary limbs. The circuit of his Station also reminds the pilgrim of that infinitely more painful journey, the Way of the Cross, over which our Blessed Lord bore, for our sake,

the heavy load of the cross up the rugged ascent to Calvary. And when the pilgrim stands with outstretched arms in front of the cross, set in the eastern wall of St. Patrick's Church, does he not thereby signify that, having renounced the devil, the world, and the flesh, he is prepared to take up his cross and follow in the footsteps of his Divine Master?

By going into "prison," or the fast-cave, or sepulchre, as it is variously termed, the pilgrim is reminded that being now dead to the world and its vanities, and having buried, so to say, his past transgressions, he may rise again to the supernatural life of grace, or to a higher degree of perfection. The ablution, usually performed after leaving "prison," is expressive of the interior cleansing which the penitential works of the Station and the reception of the Sacraments operate in the soul of the pilgrim.

The symbolical meaning of the different exercises of the Station is dwelt upon at considerable length in the little handbook by "B. D." already referred to, and at still greater length by Richardson, who gives the "Instructions," which he says were observed in his day (1727). His "Instructions" are more diffuse and circumstantial, but substantially the same as those given by "B. D." What we have already said, however, sufficiently explains how efficacious they are in awakening religious sentiments in the breasts of the pilgrims, in producing feelings of compunction and sorrow for sin, and in worthily disposing for the Sacraments.

The sermons here preached are of the most practical kind, and are followed throughout by the pilgrims with the most devout attention; so that we can safely say, never did Gospel-seed fall on more congenial soil than is to be found in the congregation assembled before St. Patrick's Sanctuary on Lough Derg.

The tolling of the island bell, summoning the pilgrims to the various Station exercises, the sound of the trumpet as it announces the departure of the ferry-boat, the murmuring of the waves upon the stony beach, the solitude, desolation, and surroundings of the place,—"All kindle in the soul feelings of awe and reverence, and fill it with a keener sense of the power of God, and of the strict account which He will require of each one, when his brief term of life is brought to a close," writes the distinguished annotator of the *Monasticon Hibernicon.*

Seeing the peculiar efficacy of the exercises of this pilgrimage towards renewing and increasing the spiritual life, the sanctity of the place, and the graces and indulgences there received, what wonder is it that the eye of the pilgrim is charmed, his heart elevated, his faith enlivened, nay, even his love for holy Ireland increased, when first the Island of Lough Derg meets his view? And what wonder is it that the Irish people should so love this Sanctuary? We love it on account of its association with the name of our National Apostle; on account of the number of saints, who here practised the Gospel counsels of perfection, and whose names are in benediction in the Irish Church; we love it because of the traditions, which enshrine it in the Irish heart; because of the numberless sinners here reconciled to God, and who here "chose the better part;" and finally, we love it for the numberless graces here received, and the blessings it is the means of obtaining for its numerous votaries, and because it excites in us lofty desires of becoming more holy.

As the island has passed through times of persecution, and has seen its great monastic buildings and noble churches demolished in the common ruin, we need not wonder that many of the glories of its worship have passed away, and that its edifices until recent times have been of so unpre-

tentious a character. Of late years a decided reaction has set in, buildings more in keeping with the dignity of the place have been erected, and the ceremonial of our holy religion is latterly observed with more befitting splendour and solemnity. The erection of the Hospice has been a distinct advance. But a much greater work remains yet unaccomplished, namely, the erection of a temple worthy of the National Pilgrimage of Ireland. Visiting some years ago the gorgeous Basilica crowning the rock of Massabielle at Lourdes, and that stupendous votive church raised by *Gallia Pœnitens* on the summit of Montmartre, we at once bethought us of that humble island chapel, that did duty for Catholic Ireland at its National Pilgrimage, and the comparison saddened us indeed. The Irish Catholics over the universe will, we doubt not, exclaim, "let the reproach be no longer endured; let the Irish people raise a votive temple at St. Patrick's Purgatory, worthy of our faith and nation, and where in after times the children of our race may receive grace to emulate the virtues of their ancestors."

Before nearing the end, I should not forget to mention that at two o'clock each afternoon the pilgrims' boat leaves for Saints' Island, about two miles distant from Station Island; and a more delightful trip can hardly be imagined. During the passage, the pilgrims employ their time in singing litanies and hymns, and occasionally the sound of instrumental music may be heard. Having traversed Saints' Island, they start on their return voyage, spending usually about an hour in this charming excursion.

From one till two o'clock being recreation hour, during which the pilgrims are absent on their excursion to Saints' Island, visitors, on receiving a special permit from the prior, may be admitted to the island, this arrangement not interfering with the Station duties.

At seven o'clock each evening, immediately after the Sermon, Benediction with the Most Holy Sacrament is given in St. Patrick's Church. For this ceremony the altar is richly decorated with lights, and with a profusion of wild flowers gathered from the islands—woodbine, variegated heath, water-lilies from islets and creeks near the river Fluchlynn, ferns in great variety, purple rockets, meadow-sweet and many other flowers and plants indigenous to those rocky islands. A choir, also, may be easily improvised from among the pilgrims; and thus, with the aid of the island harmonium, both Mass and Benediction are generally accompanied with a fair performance of sacred music. I may here observe that the ceremony of Benediction, and the other ceremonies of our holy religion seem to possess on this island retreat a peculiar charm, and to produce a more solemn effect than they do anywhere else.

We do not despair to see pilgrimages to Lough Derg organised in most of the towns and parishes throughout the kingdom, under the direction of the parochial clergy, the same as takes place in respect of the Continental places of pilgrimage. How those pilgrim processions, with their religious banners and sacred emblems, and headed by their clergy, would tend to quicken the pulse of religion throughout the land! In the revival of this pious Catholic practice, every priest should take the warmest interest, for we know what lasting fruits of penance are produced by this pilgrimage, how the rough stone is worn smooth by the generations who here did penance, and how many a sinful, sorrow-laden heart finds in this "prison" chapel and on those "beds" of stone, light, grace, and consolation. Bishop Healy in his erudite article, already quoted, thus eloquently expresses it:—

"One thing is certain: this pilgrimage has done much during

the most disastrous centuries of our history to keep alive in the hearts of the people the spirit of our holy faith and its characteristic practices. . . . . And every priest in the neighbouring counties knows well from experience what lasting fruits of penance are to this day produced by a pilgrimage to the holy island. It is, in truth, a sacred spot, that barren rock, rising from dark waters, and surrounded by bleak and frowning hills. The rough stone is worn smooth by the knees of the generations of penitents who prayed and fasted there. Many a mile they travelled, poor, toil-worn, and foot-sore, to reach that lonely island. Many a bitter tear of penance was mingled with the waters of the lake. Many a weary vigil they passed in that "prison" chapel, or on those "beds" of stone. Aye, and many a darkened soul got light, many a sinful, sorrow-laden heart found there abiding consolation."

And now, after having given what little information I was enabled to collect concerning the holy island of Lough Derg, I shall draw to a close by praying that the fame of this venerable pilgrimage may long continue to increase, that its churches and other buildings may come to rival the proportions and beauty of those monastic buildings, which stood here during the ages of faith, that crowds of votaries may long continue to find before this sanctuary that interior happiness which its penitential exercises are so calculated to produce, and that the pilgrimage of Lough Derg may always remain as a channel of mercy, grace and salvation to the faithful children of St. Patrick. In taking leave of my subject, I cannot do better than here reproduce the pathetic hymn chanted by the pilgrims, as they take their departure in the pilgrims' boat from Station Island :—

FAREWELL HYMN TO LOUGH DERG.

I.

"Oh! fare thee well, Lough Derg,
Shall I ever see you more?
My heart is filled with sorrow
To leave thy sainted shore.
Until life's days have passed away,
No pleasure can beguile
My thoughts from often turning
Back to thy sacred Isle.

II.

"St. Patrick was its founder,
At Heaven's express command,
To cleanse away the sinful stains
Of his own loved Ireland:
In hopes by prayer and penance here
God's mercy to secure,
Lest punishments hereafter
For them we may endure.

III.

"He blessed with sweet devotion
This penitential isle;
He chose as its director
St. Dabheoc, without guile;
While hosts of saints and hermits here
True happiness did find,
By leaving home and worldly joys
And kindred all behind.

IV.

"Throughout each station season,
From every distant clime,
The children of St. Patrick
Frequent this holy shrine.
Each pilgrim here is edified
With piety sincere,
And here each soul is purified
By penances severe.

V.

"But when the Holy Island
Is fading out of view,
With tears the grateful pilgrims
To it they bid adieu;
Saying, 'May its name still spread abroad,
Its fame grow greater still,
Its Patron Saint still honour'd be,
And crowds its cloisters fill.'

VI.

"So fare you well, Lough Derg;
Shall I ever see you more?
My heart is filled with sorrow
To leave thy sainted shore.
Until life's days have passed away,
With pleasure shall I dwell
On the happy days I spent with you,
Lough Derg, fare thee well!"

Finis.

Printed by EDMUND BURKE & Co., 61 & 62 Great Strand Street, Dublin.

5006

922.2415
P17

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5006

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St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg

TITLE